



**B&Q**

# The Way We Live Now: 2025





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# People are building deeper connections with their homes

Both homeowners and renters are feeling empowered to get creative with DIY, improve their current homes, and create somewhere they can live forever.

**At B&Q, we believe in better homes and better lives for everyone. Throughout our history, we've constantly evolved to adapt to the different ways people want to shop for and live in their homes. Our annual 'The Way We Live Now' report supports this evolution by revealing the latest trends, attitudes, and behaviours around modern home living.**

This year's report reveals that more people are choosing to love and not list their home. They're opting to stay where they are and embrace the idea of transforming and creating a home for life.

We're seeing homeowners have more confidence to undertake radical transformations – bedrooms being moved downstairs, garden rooms becoming annexes with separate entrances, walls going up, and others coming down. As ways of living are reimagined, home footprints are re-laid, and life gets better – whether it's accommodating a need driven by living alone, or with immediate or extended family.

It's also great to see the enjoyment of home improvement no longer being exclusive to homeowners and being embraced more by renters. Our insights reveal a stark change in the attitudes of renters towards improving where they live. We're seeing tenants building deeper connections with their homes – staying longer in the same property and building more positive, open relationships with their landlords. This is enabling more DIY requests to be approved and more transformational changes to rental homes.

As the number of DIY projects increases, the strain on the trade sector intensifies. Our research shows that Gen Z's attitude and perception of a trade profession needs to shift if we are going to fill this void. In the meantime, homeowners and renters continue to take matters into their own hands. Thanks to social media, people of all ages are increasingly watching easy-to-follow tutorials and feeling empowered to improve their homes without professional help.

With a growing demographic of DIY-ers, at B&Q, we're continuing to evolve and modernise our offer to help give all home improvers the choice and convenience they deserve, and to provide support throughout the home improvement journey.

We're giving greater choice and convenience, helping to make more sustainable choices easier, and expanding how we share our expertise – from our excellent in-store colleagues to our social media channels. Whether shopping online, on our apps, or in our high street and larger warehouse stores, we offer a choice of options to pick up, collect, or have products delivered. This all helps to make home improvement easier.

Thank you to our customers who have contributed to this report by sharing the way they live now, providing invaluable insight into how we can help everyone build a better life.



Graham Bell, B&Q CEO



# Our customers are passionate about home improvement

We're seeing a variety of trends in the way the UK is currently living, including:

- Homeowners are staying put and looking to create their forever homes
- Renters are becoming co-creators with their landlords, happily investing in their homes
- There is a growing interest in DIY that has been sparked by social media
- The trade industry is facing a generational gap, but those who have chosen a career in trade feel good about their decision.

We're going to explore:

01

Lifelong lodgings

02

Rental renovators

03

Amateur experts

04

The trade gap



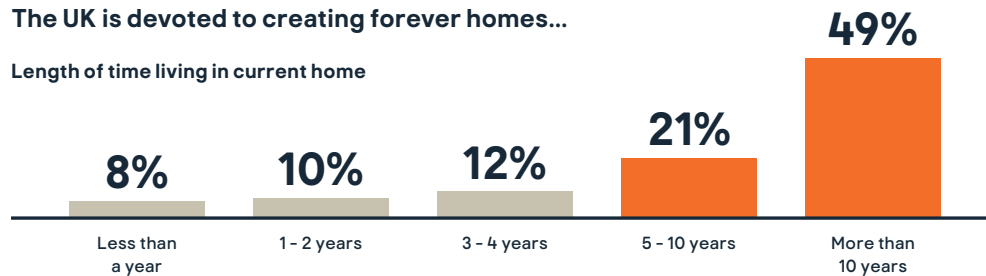


## Summary infographic

### 01 Lifelong lodgings

The UK is devoted to creating forever homes...

Length of time living in current home



...meaning that homeowners transform their homes to suit their life stage

**68%** of families have evolved their home to adapt to changing needs

**46%** of families with older children have delayed downsizing to accommodate adult children still living at home

### 03 Amateur experts

People are feeling confident about their DIY skills...



...and they're going online to learn more and share their achievements

**50%**

have used social media to find out how to complete DIY tasks

**41%**

of Gen Z film themselves doing DIY and put it on social media

### 02 Rental renovators

Renters are not optimistic about their chances of future home ownership...

**68%** of renters don't think they will ever be able to afford to buy

...meaning that renters are no longer just tenants - they're co-creators

**72%** of renters are prepared to spend money doing up their rental property to 'make it feel more like my home'

**54%**

are decorating, including painting, tiling and changing flooring

**14%**

are doing minor building work, including knocking through walls and installing a new kitchen or bathroom

### 04 The trade gap

Fewer young people are considering a job in trade...

**47%**

of 18-25-year-olds say that they have never considered working in the construction trades

**56%** agree

I want to be super rich and will do whatever it takes to get there

**36%**

young men

**58%**

young women

**30%**

of those who choose to work in the trade are motivated by starting their own business

...but for those that do, they are seeing the benefits



**01**

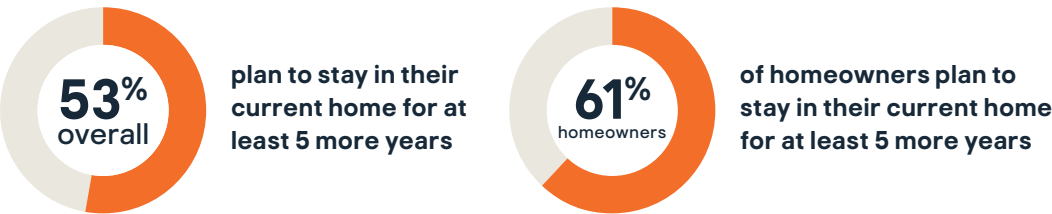
# **Lifelong lodgings**

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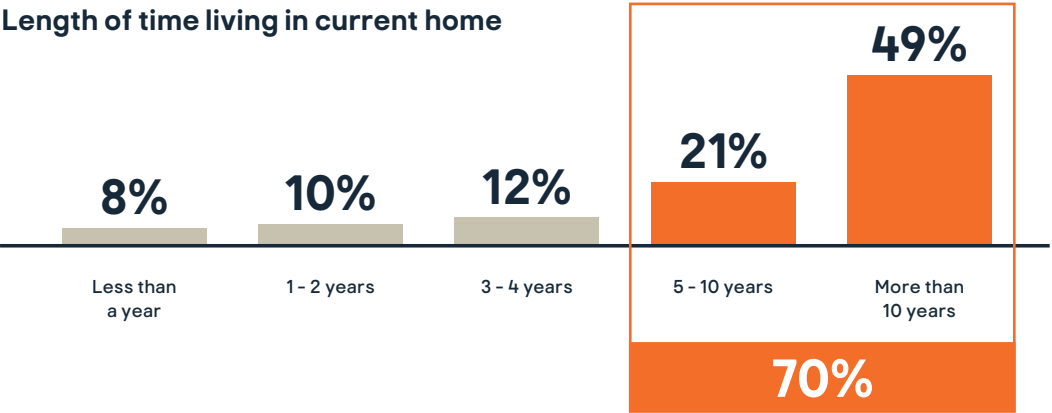


# The UK is devoted to creating forever homes

Now more than ever, people are choosing to stay in their home for an extended period of time - with nearly half having lived in their current property for over a decade.



Length of time living in current home



Looking forward, UK homeowners are settling in for the long term, with over half planning to stay in the same place for at least another five years. This marks a pattern across generations in the UK of buying homes for life. In fact, a third of Brits have only ever owned one home - and millennials account for the highest proportion at 41%.

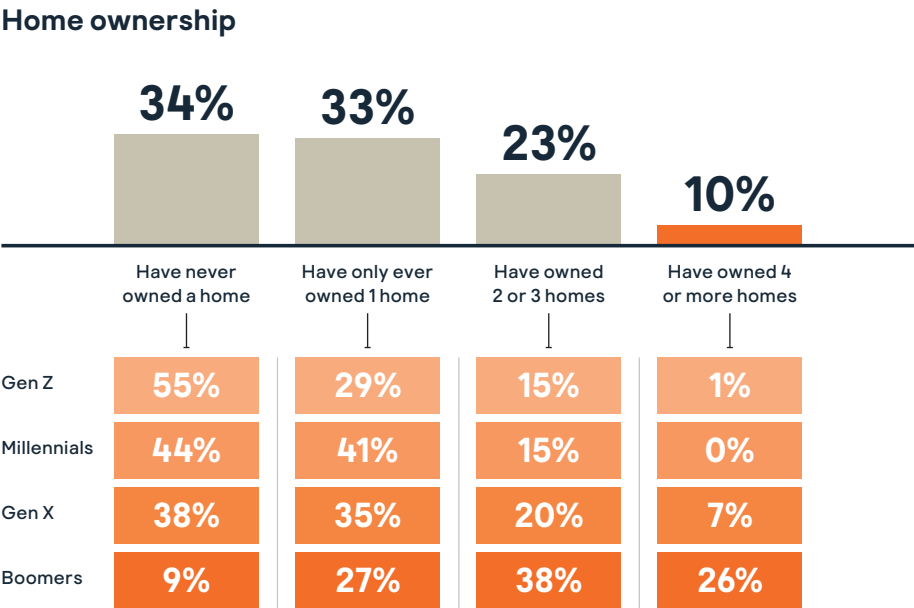


## CASE STUDY | Mandy

Mandy has lived in her home in Burwell, East Cambridgeshire, for 18 months with her husband and two daughters. The house offers a space for creativity, work, and family life. Mandy, an artist with a passion for antiques and collectables, uses the kitchen table as a makeshift studio and a craft room in the attic for additional workspace. Her husband, a DIY enthusiast, has a tool for every job. Together they are always improving their home - including building cupboards and repurposing antiques.

The house is both functional and a relaxed social space, with a large dining table serving as a hub for meals, crafts, and conversation. Guests are always welcome, and the space is flexible enough to accommodate visiting family and friends. Looking ahead, Mandy and her husband have plans for further adjustments, ensuring the house remains comfortable and practical for years to come.

Home ownership



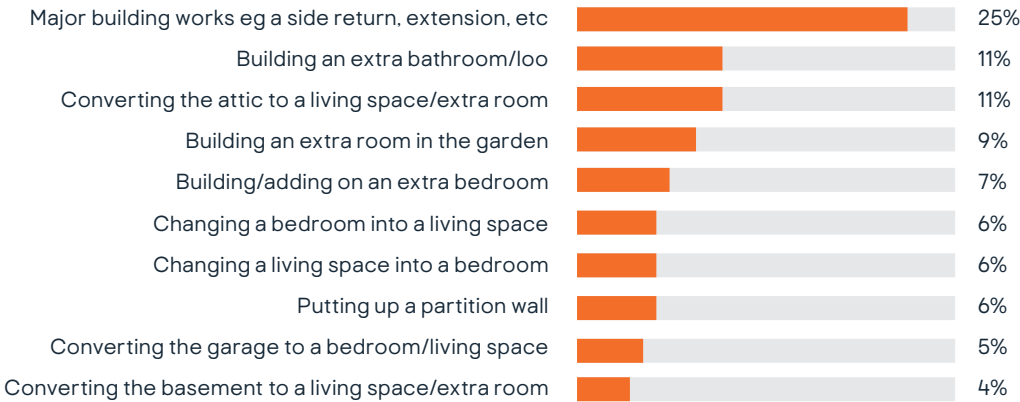


# Homeowners are transforming their homes to suit the stage of life they're in

Choosing improvements over relocation, many families are evolving their homes to meet shifting household needs.

But it's not just about a fresh coat of paint or new lighting fixtures. Homeowners are driving change with bold renovations, such as extensions or adding bathrooms, turning their homes into lifelong havens – proving that staying put doesn't mean standing still.

## Projects homeowners have conducted, or are planning to conduct, to accommodate changing family needs



68%

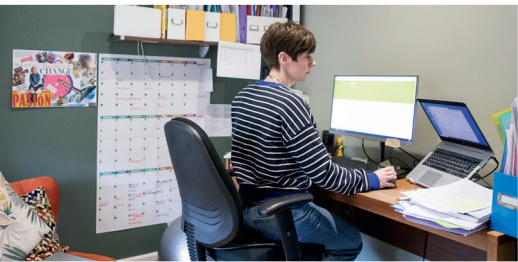
of families have evolved their home to adapt to changing needs

46%

of families with older children have delayed downsizing to accommodate adult children still living at home

40%

of homeowners have radically re-imagined the space in their homes, or are planning to, in order to accommodate changing household needs (and so have 23% of renters)



### CASE STUDY

Lucy

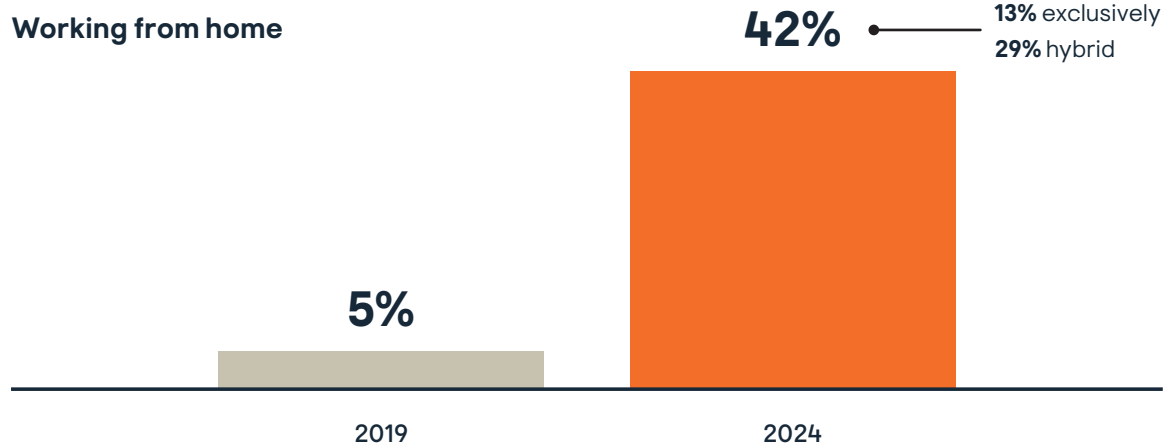
Having lived in her home for nearly 30 years, Lucy has gradually transformed it through extensions and renovations. She shares the house with her husband and teenage son, balancing a busy life between her job at a local charity and running her own business from home. The house has been adapted from a simple two-up two-down into a flexible space, to accommodate both Lucy and her husband working remotely, as well as family life.

Lucy enjoys the design and planning, while her husband does most of the hands-on work. She draws inspiration from real-life spaces and magazines, balancing function with aesthetics. The open-plan kitchen and dining area have become the heart of family life – a place where they can enjoy meals and catch-up together – while the snug is a place for them to relax. Lucy and her family have future-proofed the home, creating a space for changing family dynamics.



# Flexible working is driving a surge in DIY projects

The way we work has changed for good, with a significant portion of the UK - now over 40% - adopting flexible working arrangements.



This evolution has sparked a surge in DIY projects, as hybrid workers curate spaces that are functional and adapted to the demands of their careers. These range from creating dedicated workspaces in existing rooms, to converting whole rooms into workspaces. Nothing is getting in the way of DIY-ers from pursuing their passions.

70%

of people working flexibly have created some sort of dedicated workspace in their home



50% made a dedicated space in a room



20% converted a room into an office space



## CASE STUDY | Wendy

Wendy, 40, lives in Willingdon, Eastbourne, where she has been for over 15 years with her husband and two young boys, aged 4 and 5. A mobile hairdresser by profession, Wendy has thoughtfully adapted her home to accommodate both her growing family and her business.

Over the years, her house has undergone significant changes, from knocking down walls and upgrading essential systems to a major extension that expanded their living space.

The most recent transformation was creating a dedicated salon space, allowing Wendy to find a perfect balance, working independently without disrupting her family's routine.

As Wendy's children grow in her bustling home, she understands the importance of adapting her space, especially for her autistic, youngest son. Her journey shows how a home can evolve over time and be shaped to meet the ever-changing demands of family life.



**02**

# **Rental renovators**

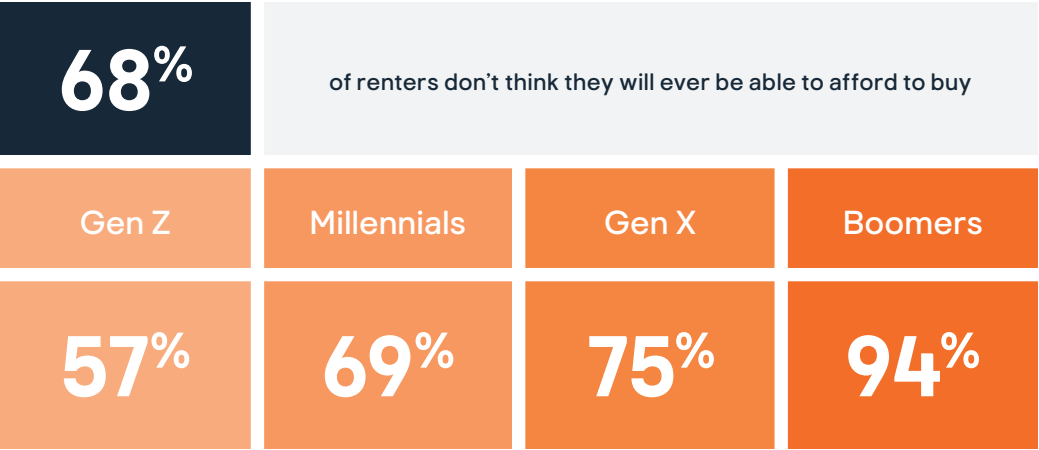
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# Owning a home feels out of reach for most renters

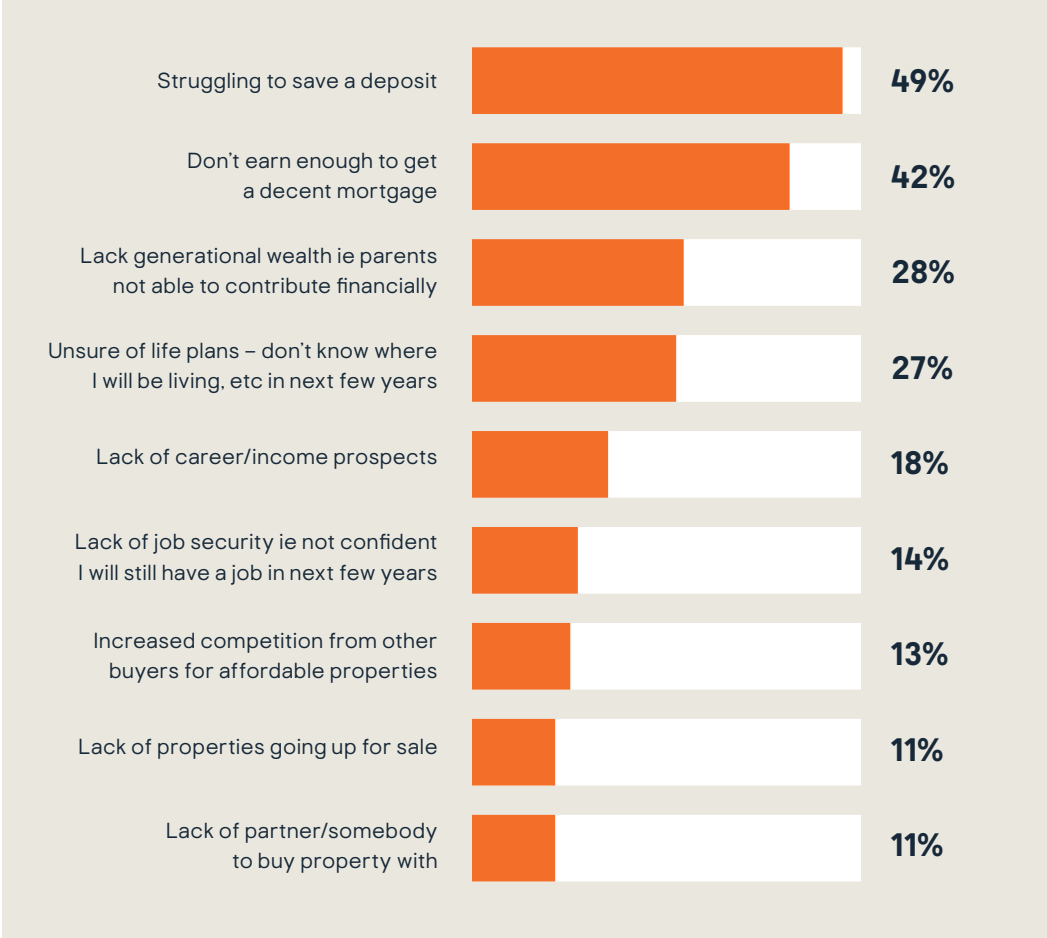
Well over half of renters in the UK believe they will never be able to afford a property if they're not already on the ladder – and this viewpoint transcends generations. In fact, the older you get, the more elusive home ownership seemingly becomes if you're renting.

The average age of first-time buyers has increased drastically over the last three decades – from 28 years old in the 90s, to 37 years old in 2023.

There are a range of economic and social factors posing barriers to buying. Financial concerns currently sit top of mind. Renters are feeling overwhelmed by deposit and mortgage demands – and are lacking generational wealth to lean back on.



## Obstacles prospective home buyers feel they are facing





# Renters genuinely enjoy their experience as tenants

Instead of getting on the ladder, renters are mirroring the homeowner experience by staying in one place. Over a third of renters have been in their homes for over a decade, simply because they love where they live.

## Level of satisfaction with current home – renters

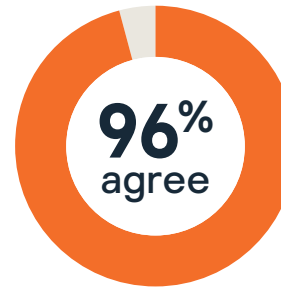


Dissatisfied  Neutral  Satisfied

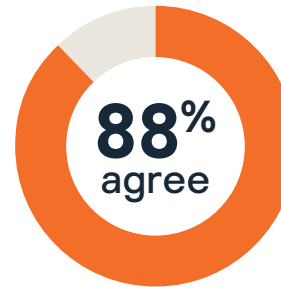
The fact that the majority of renters report having a good relationship with their landlord, echoes this positivity

A harmonious rapport makes for a more enjoyable, trustworthy and long-term experience

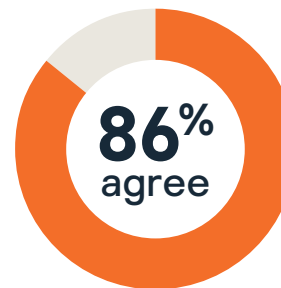
## How do renters feel?



I have a good /amicable relationship with my landlord



I think of my home as my sanctuary



I love spending time at home – it makes me happy

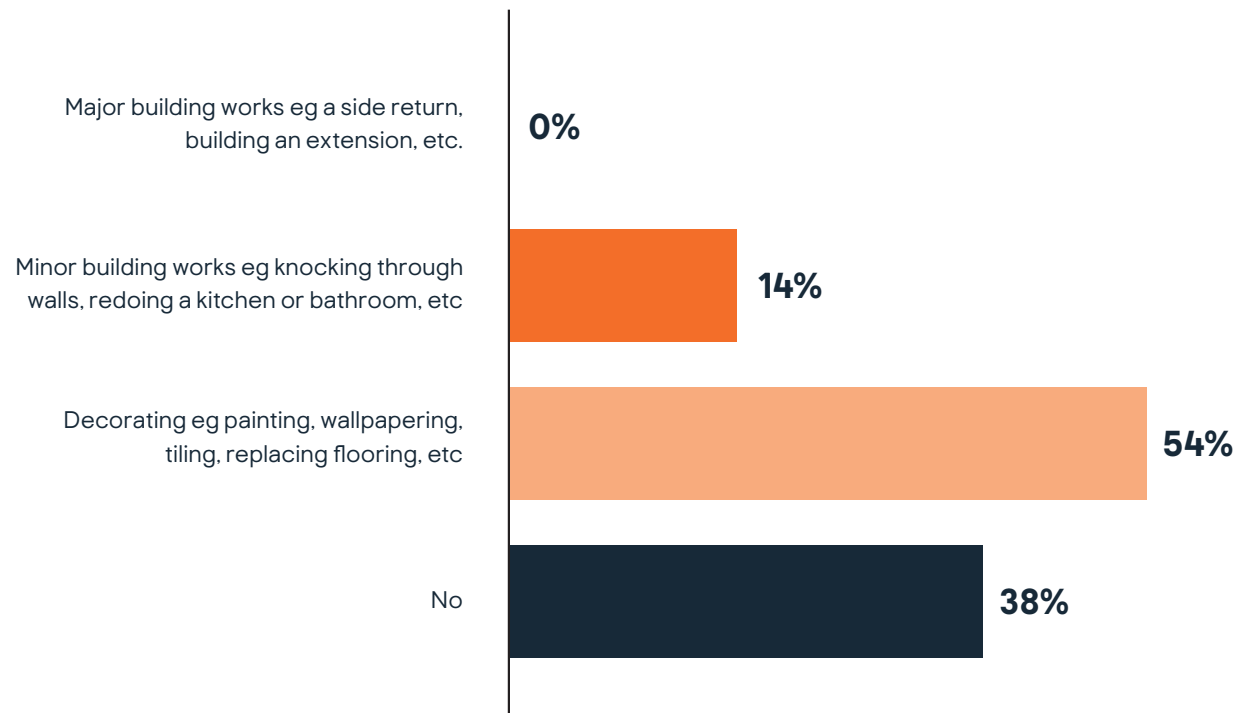


# Renters are no longer just tenants – they're co-creators

Many tenants are working with their landlord and investing in improvements to make them feel truly at home in their rented space.

We're also seeing an increase in confidence amongst renters to take on DIY tasks themselves. From painting and wallpapering to remodelling bathrooms and kitchens, renting is no longer forming a barrier to making a house a home.

% of renters who have completed work on their property since becoming a tenant



72%

of renters are prepared to spend money doing up their rental property to 'make it feel more like my home'

94%

of requests are approved by landlords





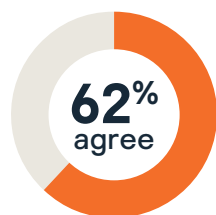
**03**

# **Amateur experts**

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# The DIY revolution is gaining momentum

We're a population of self-proclaimed DIY-ers, with the vast majority feeling more knowledgeable about DIY than they did five years ago.



I would rather 'have a go' at a DIY job than hire a tradesperson



I am a capable DIY-er

When combining this new-found confidence with the limited capacity of the trade - over half of the UK are willing to tackle DIY tasks themselves.

59%

feel more knowledgeable about DIY than they did five years ago

Gen Z

Millennials

Gen X

Boomers

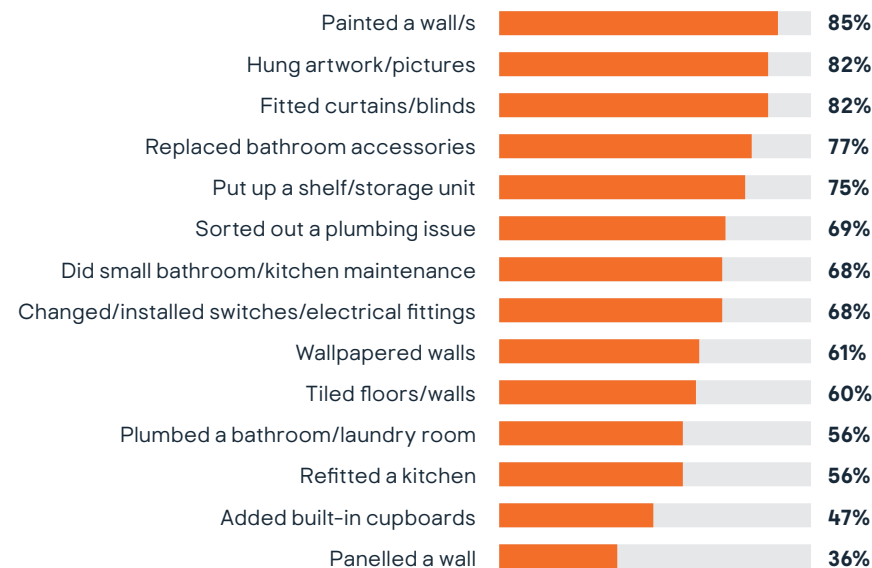
75%

70%

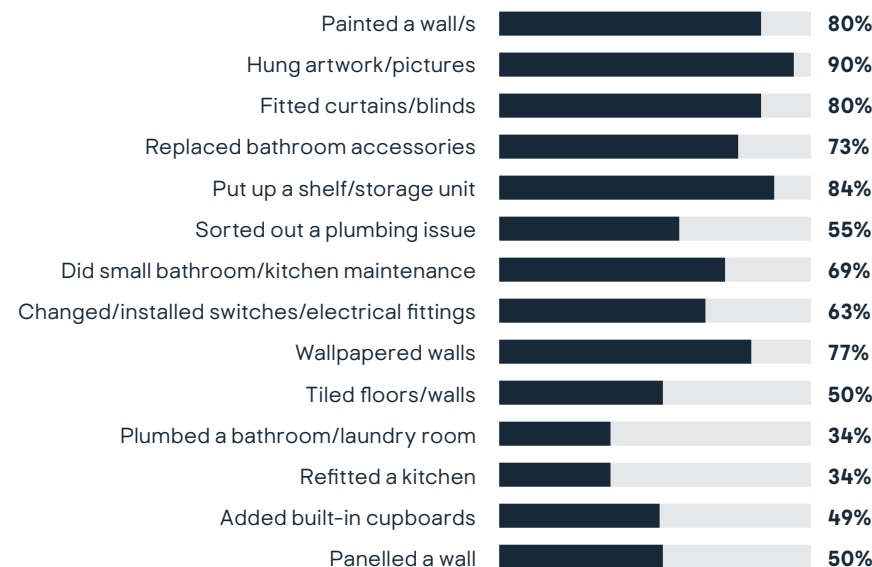
59%

41%

## % who have carried out projects in the past few years



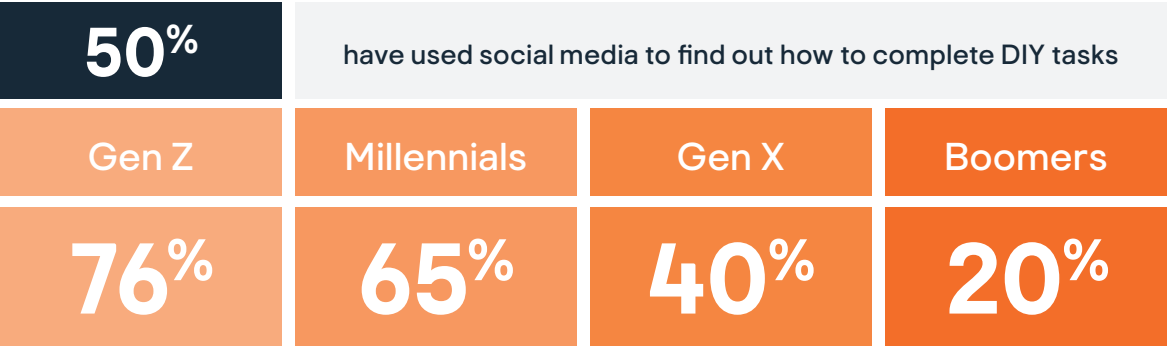
## % who did it themselves



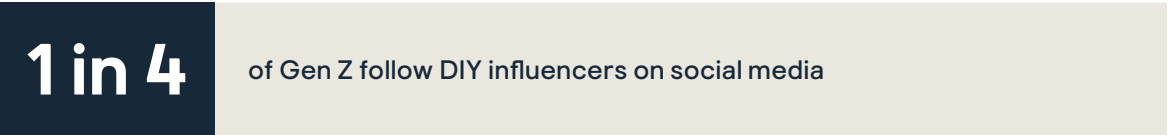


# Social media is sparking creativity in people’s home improvement projects

DIY is trending. Half of the UK population has turned to social media to help them complete DIY tasks – a movement driven by Gen Z and millennials.



Influencers have become a major source of inspiration for DIY-ers. Almost two fifths of those following home renovation influencers have felt more confident to take on new tasks in the home. Instagram proved itself to be most used for this sort of inspiration (55%), while TikTok (49%) was a close second.



But these home improvement efforts are not without their challenges. DIY-ers report running into a range of issues – such as a lack of correct tools – which stresses the importance of going into a new project prepared.



## CASE STUDY | Tariq

Tariq lives in Leeds with his wife and three children, having spent the last three years transforming his three-bedroom house.

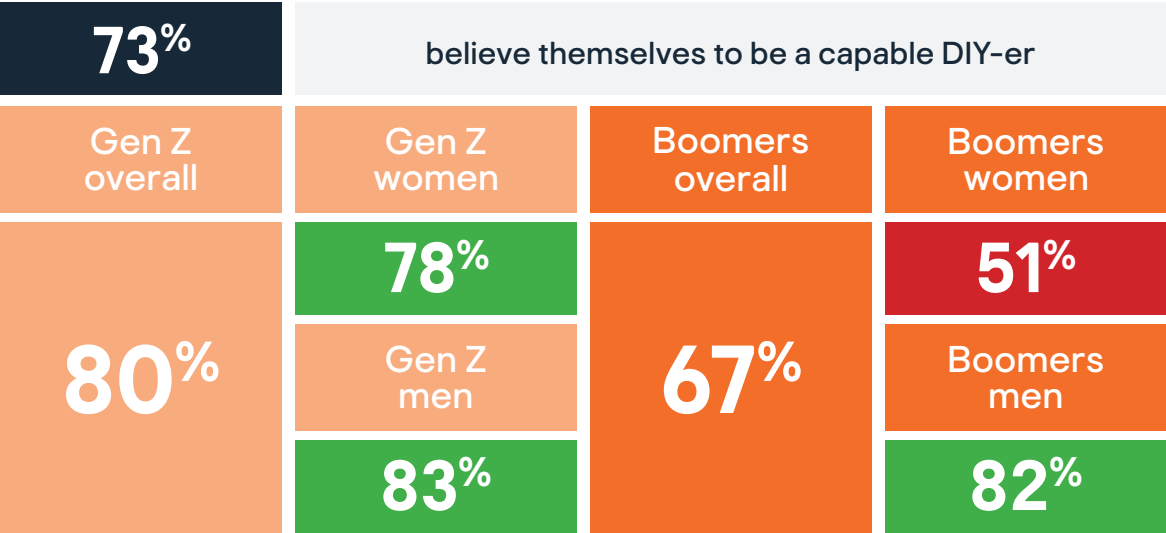
Born out of a desire to save money, Tariq has taken on major DIY projects, including electrical work, back-to-brick renovation and even installing a new heating system.

Tariq’s not only developed his DIY skills by collecting tips and tricks from friends in the trade, but through his online research too – finding nifty hacks to create his dream home.

With a focus on long-term practicality, he’s designed his home from the ground up, personalising it to suit the needs of his family.

# For Gen Z, gender is no barrier to DIY

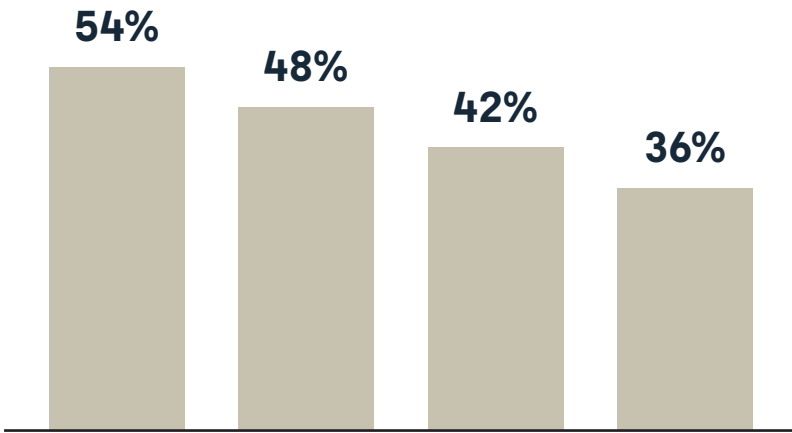
The days of DIY being considered a male-dominant activity are over. While men's confidence in their DIY skills remains similar between generations, Gen Z women have taken a hammer to stereotypes, with over three-quarters now confident in their capabilities (vs half of women in the boomer generation).



So confident are Gen Z DIY-ers, they're broadcasting their abilities online – emulating influencers by recording content of their projects to post on social media.



## How are people engaging with DIY content?



Watching videos of people doing DIY has made me realise I am able to do projects myself that I would previously have hired trades-people to do

Because I have watched DIY videos, I have done DIY in my house in the past year that I previously would have been too afraid to do myself

I watch a lot of DIY/home reno/makeover video content on social media

I follow home renovation/DIY influencers on social media



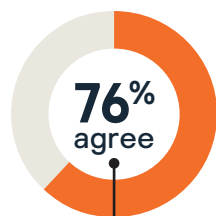
04

## The trade gap

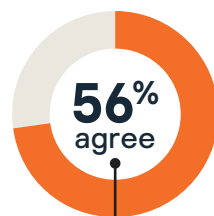
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# Gen Z job hunters are pursuing high-purpose, high-income careers

The UK's aspiring professionals (aged 18-25) are looking for more than just a job - they crave careers that change lives, and women are spearheading this trend.



doing a job/having a career with purpose and a positive social impact is important to me



I want to be super rich and will do whatever it takes to get there

69% young men  
83% young women

54% young men  
58% young women

Income also counts. Faced with a wave of entrepreneurial social media influencers and unprecedented exposure to the world's luxuries, half of Gen Z want to become "super rich" and will do whatever it takes to get there





# The trade industry is suffering from a generational gap

Despite a clear recreational interest in DIY, nearly half of Gen Z say that they have never considered construction trades as a career choice.

**47%**

of 18-25-year-olds say that they have never considered working in the construction trades

36% young men  
58% young women

**49%**

of 18-25-year-olds don't want to do anything that requires physical labour – they'd rather work in a corporate setting

Across Gen Z, both men and women seem more focused on pursuing a career which would align with a positive social impact while allowing them to get 'super rich' however they can.

## Barriers to working in the trade



# The youth who have embraced a trade career are reaping the rewards

For Gen Z individuals that have taken the leap into a career in trade, the sentiment is extremely positive. They've particularly noted approval of their pay, career progression, and the doorways it opens to start their own company.

## Reasons for choosing the trade as a career



## CASE STUDY: Jess

Jess is a tradeswoman living in Herefordshire, where she has been building her career over the past few years.

Over time, she has transformed her passion for DIY into a full-time profession, initially balancing her projects alongside her day job working in a corporate office role. From small garden renovations to large-scale home improvements, Jess developed her skills through trial and error, often relying on online tutorials for support.

As Jess continues to grow in her career undertaking a trade apprenticeship, she understands the value of adapting and learning, especially when tackling complex home projects. Her journey highlights how dedication and creativity can turn a passion for DIY into a fulfilling and successful career in the trade industry.



# Methodology and credits

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This research was conducted by The Source, an independent research agency. 40 in-depth UK home visits were conducted as part of this research in November 2024. 2,000 members of the UK public, aged 18+, were surveyed in January 2025. A further 1,000 were interviewed in February 2025.

