The LawnStarter.com 2020 New Homebuyer Happiness Index — Methodology and Questions

The LawnStarter.com 2020 New Homebuyer Happiness Index is a large-scale survey that measures how happy recent homeowners are with their purchase and measures the factors that go into that happiness.

The survey aims to help home buyers, real estate professionals and those who provide services to homebuyers to discover what goes into making a purchase and what success looks like in homebuying transactions.

The national average score on the Happiness Index was 81; here's how the states compare.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Home State</th>
<th>Happiness Index</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Iowa</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
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<td>Delaware</td>
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Items Homebuyers Refused to Give Up

Items Homebuyers Gave Up
Methodology


We asked 35 questions that were used to create this story. Questions 1-15 collect standard demographic data, without asking personally identifiable information. Questions 16 and 17 were qualifying questions. The remaining questions as about various aspects of the homebuying experience.

This study employed an online survey using a convenience sampling methodology via the Survey Monkey platform.

To verify the answers as valid, outlier data were identified and screened against known norms. Also screened out were those respondents who did not purchase a house in 2019, failed to pass a “Captcha” test or failed to complete the survey. In the end, 5,672 responses were validated.

The “Happiness Index” was created using six core questions (Questions 28 and 31-35 below). Questions were weighted equally and converted to a 100-point scale for ease of understanding. Subsequent data analysis compared various demographic and geographic groups against the index number to see what factors corresponded with happier and less happy homebuyers.

Survey questions used in this story:

1. What is your gender?
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Non-binary / third gender
   d. Prefer to self-describe
   e. Prefer not to say
2. What is your race or origin?
   a. White (Caucasian)
   b. Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
   c. Black or African American
   d. Asian or Pacific Islander
   e. Native American or American Indian
3. What is your age?

4. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?
   a. Did not complete high school
   b. High school diploma
   c. Technical or vocational certificate
   d. Associate’s degree
   e. Bachelor’s degree
   f. Master’s Degree
   g. Doctoral degree

5. In general, how would you describe your own political viewpoint?
   a. Liberal
   b. Moderate
   c. Conservative
   d. Prefer not to answer

6. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a …?
   a. Democrat
   b. Republican
   c. Independent
   d. Other
   e. Prefer not to answer

7. Are you currently serving or have you ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Military Reserves, or National Guard?
   a. Yes, I am an active duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces
   b. Yes, I currently serve in the Military Reserves or the National Guard
   c. Yes, I previously served on active duty in the Us Armed Forces, Military Reserves or National Guard
   d. No, I have never served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Military Reserves or National Guard

8. What is your current relationship status?
   a. Single
   b. In a relationship but not married
   c. Married
   d. Divorced
   e. Widowed
   f. Engaged

9. What industry do you currently work in?
   a. Management Occupations
   b. Business and Financial Operations Occupations
c. Computer and Mathematical Occupations  
d. Architecture and Engineering Occupations  
e. Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations  
f. Community and Social Service Occupations  
g. Legal Occupations  
h. Educational Instruction and Library Occupations  
i. Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations  
j. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations  
k. Healthcare Support Occupations  
l. Protective Service Occupations  
m. Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations  
n. Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations  
o. Personal Care and Service Occupations  
p. Sales and Related Occupations  
q. Office and Administrative Support Occupations  
r. Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations  
s. Construction and Extraction Occupations  
t. Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations  
u. Production Occupations  
v. Transportation and Material Moving Occupations  
w. Specific Occupations  

10. What is your sexual orientation?  
   a. Hetrosexual  
   b. LGBTQ+  

11. What is the number of adults in the current household?  
12. What is the number of children in the current household?  
13. What State do you reside in?  
   a. Alabama  
   b. Alaska  
   c. Arizona  
   d. Arkansas  
   e. California  
   f. Colorado  
   g. Connecticut  
   h. Delaware  
   i. District of Columbia  
   j. Florida  
   k. Georgia  
   l. Hawaii
14. What county do you live in?
15. What city do you live in?
16. Did you buy a house in 2019?
   a. Yes
   b. No
17. Did you sell a house in 2019?
   a. Yes
   b. No
18. Does your home have a …
   Garage?
      1. Yes
      2. No
   Pool?
      1. Yes
      2. No
   Front Yard?
      1. Yes
      2. No
   Backyard?
      1. Yes
      2. No
19. Why style is your home?
   1. Modern
   2. Victorian
   3. Cape Cod
   4. Greek Revival
   5. Ranch
   6. Craftsman
   7. English Cottage
   8. Pueblo Revival
   9. Spanish
   10. Tudor
11. Other

20. What did you give up when looking for a home in 2019? (You may select more than one)
   a. Pool
   b. Garage
   c. Upgraded Kitchen
   d. Basement/finished basement
   e. Upgraded appliances
   f. Preferred flooring
   g. Upgraded fixtures
   h. Number of bedrooms
   i. Number of bathrooms
   j. Backyard size
   k. Front yard size
   l. Gated community
   m. Proximity to work
   n. School ratings
   o. Home office
   p. Other

21. What did you refuse to give up when looking for a new home in 2019? (You may select more than one)

   1. Pool
   2. Garage
   3. Upgraded Kitchen
   4. Basement/finished basement
   5. Upgraded appliances
   6. Preferred flooring
   7. Upgraded fixtures
   8. Number of bedrooms
   9. Number of bathrooms
   10. Backyard size
   11. Front yard size
   12. Gated community
   13. Proximity to work
   14. School ratings
   15. Home office
22. When saving up to buy your home did you have to change your lifestyle in any way?  
   Yes
   No

23. When saving up to buy your home did you:
   Stop going out to eat to afford the purchase of your home in 2019?
   1. Yes, I totally stopped going out to eat.
   2. Yes, I went out to eat less often.
   3. No, nothing changed
   Get a second job to afford the purchase of your home in 2019?
   1. Yes, a part-time job.
   2. Yes, a full-time job.
   3. No

24. Did you sell items in your home to afford the purchase of your home in 2019?  
   Yes (list items)
   No

25. Please rank the reasons on why you chose the house you chose. (1 being the most important reason)
   a. Size
   b. Price
   c. Pool
   d. Yard size
   e. Landscaping
   f. Kitchen
   g. Bathrooms
   h. Location
   i. Other (please fill in)

26. How did you perceive the efficacy of the public school system around the home you purchased in 2019?
   1. Very good
   2. good
   3. Neutral
   4. poor
   5. Very poor
27. How would you rank your homebuying experience? (10 being the best).

28. If you knew what you know now, would you buy the same home?
   a. Yes
   b. No

29. How knowledgeable were you on the homebuying process before you bought your home in 2019?
   a. Very knowledgeable
   b. Knowledgeable
   c. Somewhat knowledgeable
   d. Little knowledge
   e. No knowledge

30. How much more did you spend on your home you purchased in 2019 than the original budget you set?

31. On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with the friendliness of your neighbors? (10 being the most friendly)

32. On a scale of 1-10, how safe do you feel in your new home? (10 being the safest)

33. On a scale of 1-10, how good do you think the job market is in your new city? (10 being the best)

34. On a scale of 1-10, how do you feel the city where you bought your home is a good place to raise children? (10 being the best)

35. Do you regret your purchase?
   a. Yes
   b. No