

# What your new home will look like in 2015

October 25 2011, By Matt Hickman

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The fact that the average American home is slowly but surely shrinking - and will most likely continue to do so if and when the country shakes off its current financial woes - isn't exactly revolutionary news. But when members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) were asked earlier this year what they anticipate the new home size will be 2015, it's how they think single-family homes will shrink - which standard features of the average home will disappear to compensate for less square footage and which ones will remain or become more popular - that's the most revealing about the shifting needs and wants of homeowners.

In terms of square footage, the anticipated drop isn't too drastic. Currently, single-family homes measure in at an average of 2,400 square feet, a slight decrease from an average of around 2,521 square feet just five years ago. In 2015, industry professionals who were surveyed believe that this number will drop to around 2,150 square feet. And to make up for less square footage, new homes in four years will be sans ... living [room](#). That's right, no more living rooms. Fifty-two percent of those surveyed believe that traditional living rooms will be combined into other areas of the home such as family rooms and kitchens to form "great rooms." About 30 percent of builders believe the living room will vanish entirely.

Also likely to become less in demand by 2015? Mudrooms, formal dining rooms, skylights, sunrooms, three-season porches, media rooms, butler's pantries, and homes exceeding four bedrooms and three bathrooms.

In the near future, surveyed builders expect to see more ceiling fans, larger laundry rooms, eat-in kitchens, first floor master suites with walk-in closets, and kitchens with double sinks and recessed lighting. And that two-car garage? It isn't going anywhere. But roomy three-car garages? Prepare yourself to say adios.

Although the average American home in 2015 (mercifully) won't resemble something out of "Blade Runner," 68 percent of builders surveyed say that energy-saving technologies and features including low-E windows, energy-efficient appliances, and LED lighting will be common along with other green features like engineered wood products, and water-saving plumbing fixtures such as dual-flush toilets and low-flow faucets. Whole-house Energy Star certification is likely to become the norm for new homes in 2015, but LEED certification will not. Green features considered "somewhat likely" to be included in new homes include argon windows, tankless water heaters, above-code insulation, and solar photovoltaic and thermal systems.

Says Stephen Melman, director of Economic Services with the NAHB: "Although affordability is driving these decisions, smaller homes are a positive for builders. It allows for more creative design, more amenities, better flow. It's an opportunity to deliver a better [home](#)."

**More information:** Check out the entire NAHB report here: [www.nahb.org/generic.aspx?sect...153664&channelID=311](http://www.nahb.org/generic.aspx?sect...153664&channelID=311)

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