

Cooking at Home

A Taste of Home Study

2022



Taste of Home



We quantified a positive that came out of these past few disruptive years. Home cooks leaned into more experimentation and learning new skills. And this has had lasting impact, with today's home cooks expressing more confidence and creativity, and more commitment to healthy cooking and eating.



- Babette Lazarus | VP, Insights Lab



Cooking at Home

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Study Background

Now into year three of the pandemic, Taste of Home wanted to learn about how our audience is cooking right now and explore current attitudes toward meal planning, cooking and working in their kitchens. We also wanted to learn more about their interest in kitchen cleaning, organization, gear and gadgets, and more.

3 Key Areas of Study

Cooking Then and Now



Kitchen Aspirations

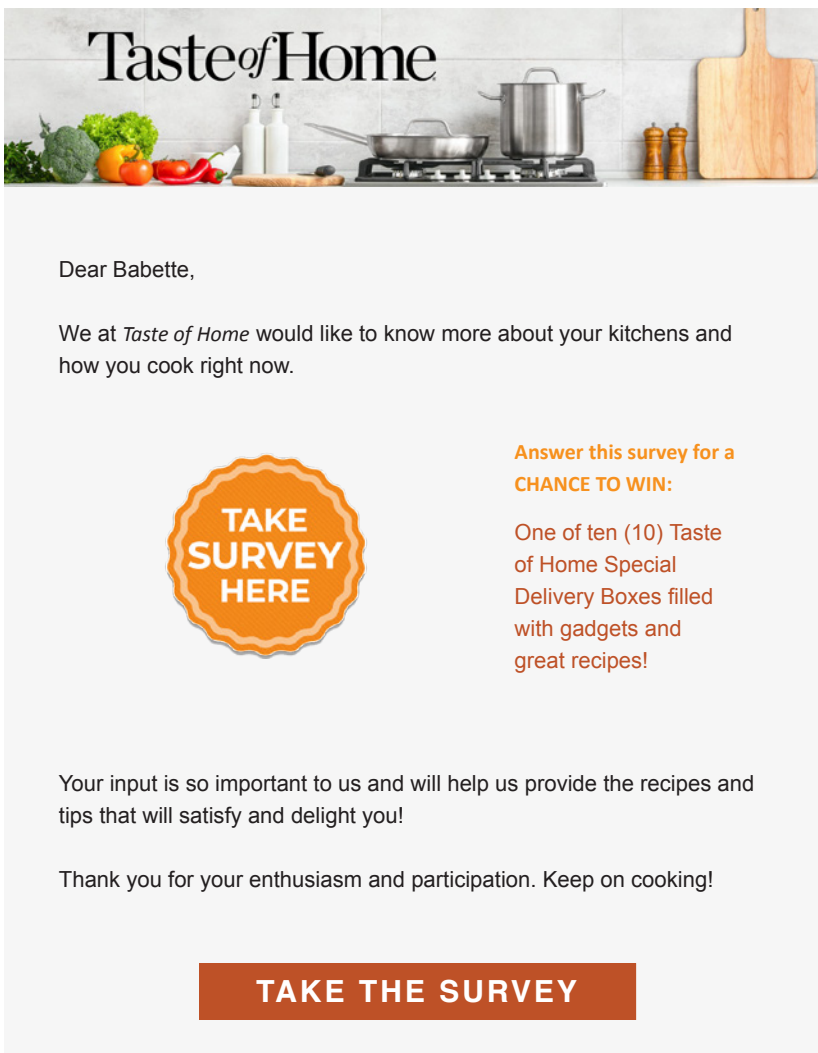


Content Insights



Study Methodology

A survey was fielded to a sample of Taste of Home newsletter and print subscribers.



Survey
8-minutes, open
February 8-22, 2022



Results
Based on 3,801
respondents, ages
ranging 18-75



Incentive
Win a Taste of Home
Special Delivery Box



What We Learned

Study results point to fundamental shifts in the mindset and behaviors of home cooks over the past two years, from more experimentation to better meal planning to online grocery shopping. Some of these shifts appear to be permanent.

There are **three major key insights...**



Key Insight #1

New Skills & Experimentation

The pandemic sparked a new era of creativity in the kitchen. More time at home resulted in experimenting with new recipes, learning **new skills** and buying **new tools** and appliances (think air fryer!). Home cooks have become **more nimble** and are still adapting to their changing households, to rising food prices, and increased socialization with friends and family.



Key Insight #2

More Joy in Cooking

Contrary to some marketplace reporting, Taste of Home cooks are **not tired of cooking** and in fact, about 8 in 10 say they enjoyed cooking and baking more during the pandemic. And while some practices like sourdough bread baking may have waned, the passion for cooking has not. Cooking from scratch remains a priority. 62% are seeking new recipes more than they did six months ago. However, home cooks, especially millennials, are looking for **simple meal prep** and quick and easy recipes.



Key Insight #3

Healthy Eating is a Priority

With more cooking at home and a more deliberate approach to meal planning, the pandemic became an opportunity to focus on healthy cooking practices. **“Healthy meals/quality ingredients”** is the top cooking priority for nearly 7 in 10 home cooks in our study.



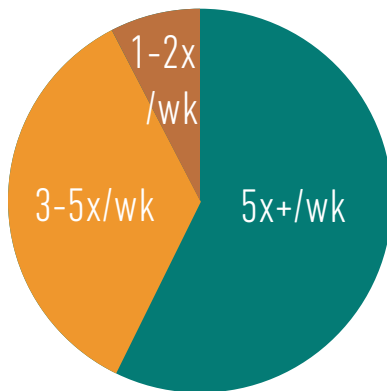
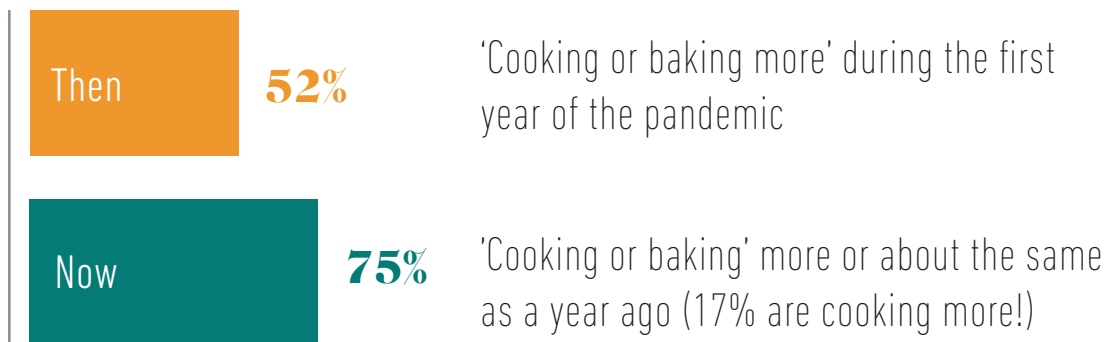
Cooking Then & Now

Cooking More
Cooking Fatigue?
Enjoying it More
Experimenting More
More Recipe-Seeking
Healthy First
Easier Meal Prep
Cooking Habits Now
Still Adapting and Adjusting
Grocery Pickup and Delivery

Cooking Then & Now

Cooking More

Taste of Home cooks stepped up their cooking and baking during the pandemic and have not let up. The majority are cooking and baking at home every bit as often - or more - than they were a year ago.



6 in 10 are cooking or baking 5+ times per week

60% 5+ times per week

33% 3-5 times per week

7% 1-2 times per week

No. times cook/bake per week

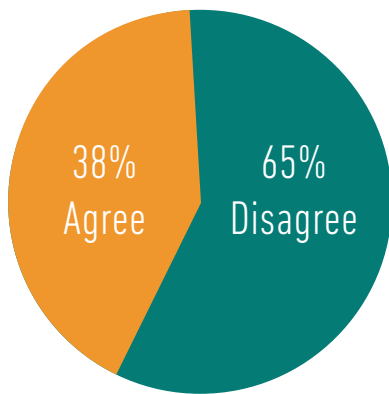
Q. During the course of the pandemic, cooking and baking habits may have changed for some people. During the first year of the pandemic, would you say you were cooking or baking more, about the same or less as pre-pandemic.

Q. Now comparing today to your cooking and baking habits the first year of the pandemic, are you cooking or baking more, about the same or less?

Cooking Fatigue?

Contrary to reporting we see about fatigue with cooking at home, the majority of Taste of Home cooks are not tired of cooking. The younger generation of home cooks, in particular, have embraced cooking at home.

“Cooking became my passion during the pandemic, and remains my passion still.”
- Millennial Woman



Disagree: “I have become tired of so much cooking at home.”

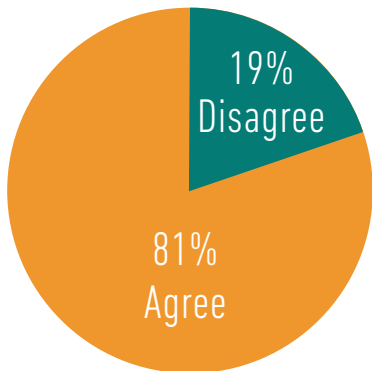
70% Millennial **75%** GenX **63%** Boomer

Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about cooking at home?

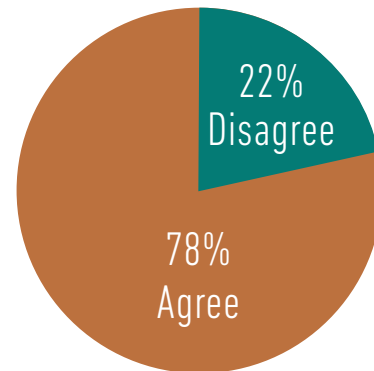
Enjoying It More

“ I’ve had fun ordering from Hello Fresh and I’ve learned some new techniques from that. It makes using my gadgets fun too. I bought a zester and a citrus press which I use all the time now. **Little things make me happy. LOL!**
– Boomer Woman

I eat out less now. **I have learned to enjoy cooking more from scratch** and trying new recipes. ”
– GenX Woman



“I have enjoyed **cooking** more during the pandemic.”



“I have enjoyed **baking** more during the pandemic.”

33% Strongly Agree **41%** Millennials

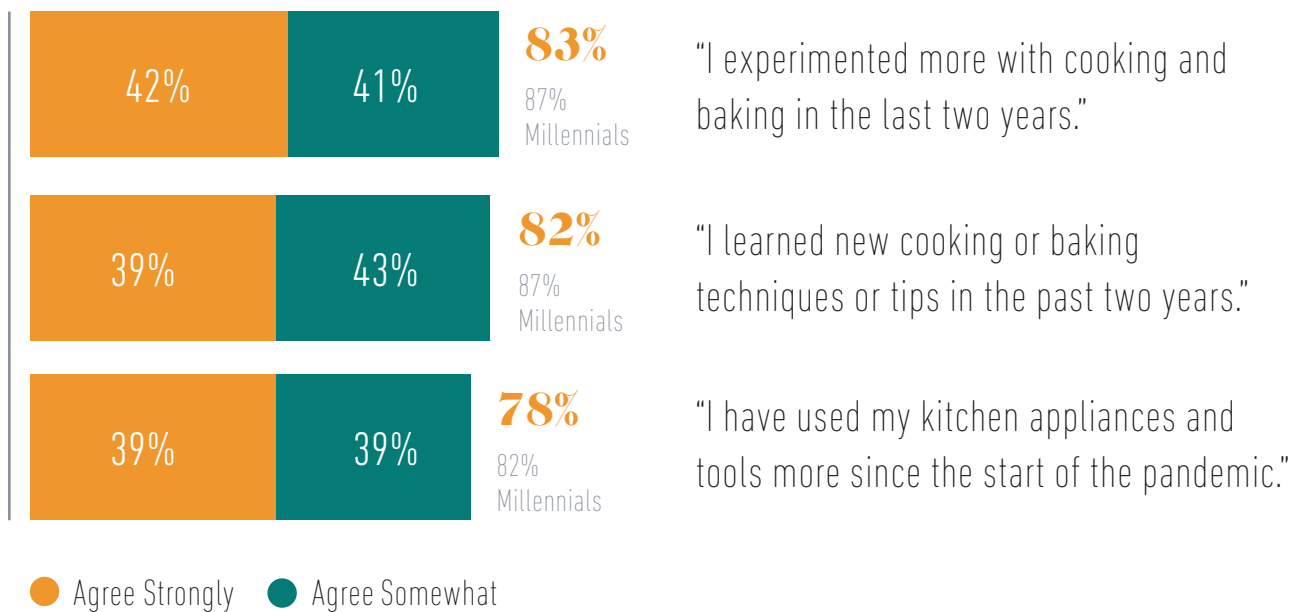
Q. If at all, how has the pandemic affected your home cooking habits and meal preparation? Has this changed over time?

Experimenting More

Taste of Home cooks took advantage of more time at home by experimenting in the kitchen and learning new techniques, with millennial cooks even more so. Nearly 8 in 10 agree they use their kitchen appliances and tools more since start of the pandemic.

“ I am cooking more meals at home and creating lots of wonderful items. For instance, I am now grinding my own wheat berries to bake my own bread. I have my own sourdough starter. I grow my own sprouts. I make my own Greek yogurt. ”

– Millennial Woman



Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about cooking at home?

Q. If at all, how has the pandemic affected your home cooking habits and meal preparation? Has this changed over time?

More Recipe-Seeking

Currently, we see more recipe seeking, more usage of tools and gadgets, and more cooking/baking from scratch. Increase in ‘stocking up’ may be related to the Omicron wave.

6 in 10 (62%) are looking for new recipes more versus six months ago.

“ I do more internet searching to find recipes to experiment on cooking new meals and desserts. I don’t mind cooking from scratch because I have the time and it is healthier. I can prepare in advance and go out to run errands and not have to rush. I now enjoy cooking more. ”
- Boomer Woman

Doing More Now vs. 6 Months Ago

- Looking for new recipes (62%)
- Using my tools & gadgets (36%)
- Stocking up the pantry (36%)
- Cooking from scratch (27%)
- Baking from scratch (25%)
- Making quick and easy recipes (23%)
- Stocking up on frozen foods (23%)

Doing Less Now vs. 6 Months Ago

- Using prepared/convenience foods (36%)
- Using grocery pickup/delivery (17%)
- Cooking meals in advance (14%)

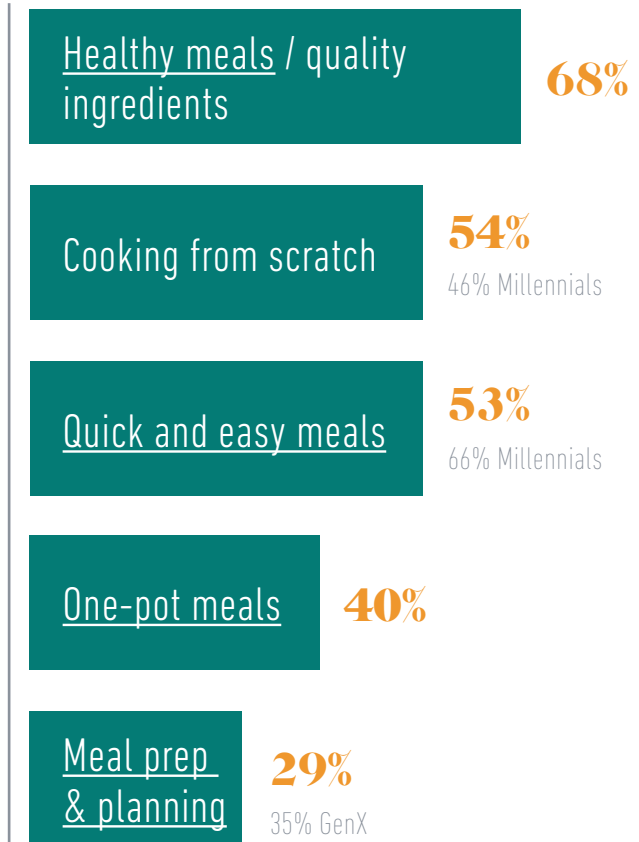
Q. For the activities listed below, are you doing more, about the same or less compared to six months ago?

Q. If at all, how has the pandemic affected your home cooking habits and meal preparation? Has this changed over time?

Healthy First

Taste of Home cooks are prioritizing healthy meals above all. Cooking from scratch is rated 'very important' to more than half of the survey respondents. Millennials are looking for quick and easy recipes, too. Recipes and solutions that combine healthy with easy preparation will resonate with today's home cooks across generations.

“ I cook healthier now and am much more selective of ingredients. I make an effort to stay away from processed foods as much as possible. ”
– GenX Woman

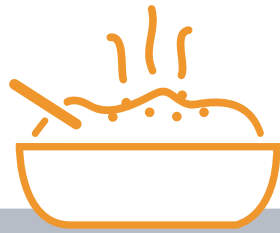


● Agree Strongly

Q. In your approach to cooking now, what are your top priorities? Please check up to three.

Easier Meal Prep

While more than half are seeking easier meal prep, millennials and Gen Xers are **significantly more*** likely than older home cooks to 'strongly agree' they are looking for ways to make meal preparation easier.

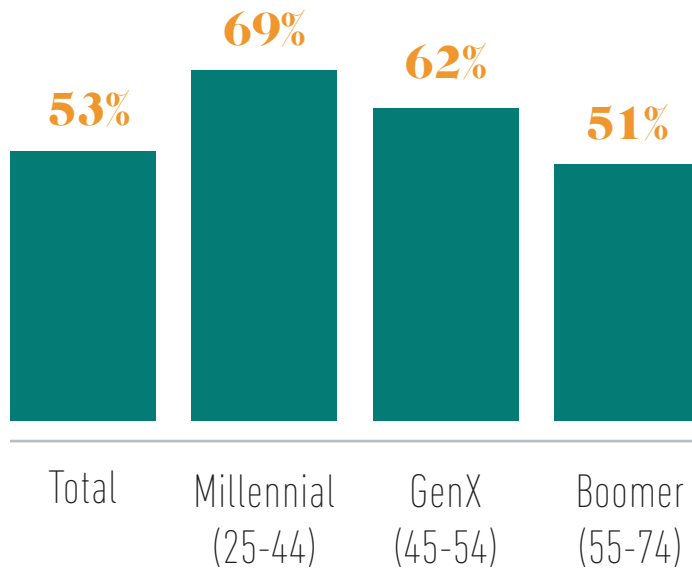


Optimal time for getting dinner on the table among 48%

31-45
minutes

"I am looking for ways to make meal preparation easier"

● Agree Strongly



Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about cooking at home?

*Statistical significance at 95% confidence

Cooking Habits Now

How has the pandemic affected your home cooking habits and meal preparation?

Healthy Cooking

“**Cooking healthy.** Try to make extra for another meal and freeze it. Look for new recipes! Share with neighbors and friends.”

“I plan more and **think more about what I am putting in my body.** The pandemic gave me time to completely revamp my diet so now I am eating healthier.”

Variety / Creativity

“I find myself cooking a lot more complex, regional cuisines. Right now I am really into cooking recipes from Hong Kong!”

“We’re eating at home more, so I’m looking for different recipes for the same ingredients. **I tend to look for different ways to use the leftovers.**”

“I wanted to have variety instead of the same handful of recipes that I always made. I began using Taste of Home to expand the recipes I make and find ones that are **freezer friendly so I can make them ahead.**”

Learning / Experimenting

“I have taken a couple of online classes about meal prep and planning.”

“I’ve become more creative in the kitchen, trying new recipes...It’s been a lot of fun! Also, I’ve been learning a lot from videos and things **I’ve read on the internet about ingredient interactions.** Sooo interesting!”

“I use my InstaPot to meal prep now ... **I got an InstaPot but was a little afraid of it. Once the Pandemic started. I learned how to use it.** What a meal helper!”

Make Ahead / Meal Planning

“Cook larger meals so we have leftovers for another meal.”

“I do better meal planning so not to have a need to run in and out of grocery stores as often as I did prepandemic.”

Q. If at all, how has the pandemic affected your home cooking habits and meal preparation? Has this changed over time?

Still Adapting & Adjusting

How has the pandemic affected your home cooking habits and meal preparation?

“ During the pandemic, I had to provide breakfast, lunch and dinner for 5 people every single day. **Now the kids are all off at college so I am only cooking for two and that’s been a huge adjustment.**

– GenX Woman

Various shortages have forced me to buy more frozen meats chicken and vegetables which requires more planning (to defrost). I limited my shopping to one day a week so I was making more soups for “meal starters” when produce was not available for salads. Similar substitutions for fruit. I am baking less for several reasons including few if any get together with family and friends.

– Boomer Woman

I am careful in planning my meal. I no longer buy anything premade, like spaghetti sauce. I make everything from scratch. I’m also very careful to use everything in my freezer, before buying more. **I made a list of foodstuffs and stick to that list because groceries have gotten much more expensive.**”

– Boomer Woman

Q. If at all, how has the pandemic affected your home cooking habits and meal preparation? Has this changed over time?

Grocery Pickup/Delivery

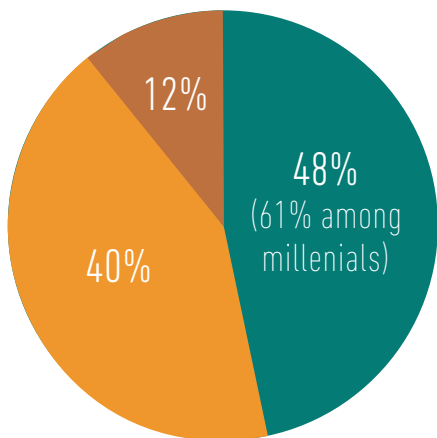
Grocery pickup/delivery services saw huge spikes during the pandemic and have still maintained a large share of new customers. Nearly 4 in 10 used a grocery pickup or delivery service during the pandemic and about half of those are still using a service.



4 in 10

58% Among Millennials

used a grocery pickup or delivery service since the beginning of the pandemic



Among those who used a grocery/pickup delivery service:

- 48%** I am still using a grocery pickup or delivery service
- 40%** I am no longer using a grocery pickup or delivery service but may in the future
- 12%** I am no longer using a grocery pickup or delivery service and don't intend to

Q. Did you use a grocery pickup or delivery service at any time since the beginning of the pandemic whether exclusively or in addition to shopping in the store?

Q. Which best describes your usage of a grocery pickup or delivery service now?



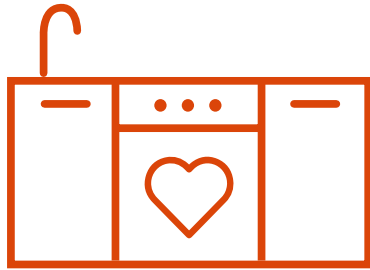
Kitchen **Aspirations**

What makes you happiest
about your kitchen?

What frustrates you most
about your kitchen?

Room for Improvement

What Makes You Happiest About Your Kitchen?



54%

64% Among Millennials

"My kitchen is my happy place"



Cooking for my kids brings me joy, knowing they are eating and trying new things and learning to cook with me.

– Millennial Woman

Being in my kitchen baking is my favorite pastime.

– GenX Woman

That I am able to escape for short periods of time and be as creative as I like. That folks enjoy what I make and I **am able to make someone happy.**

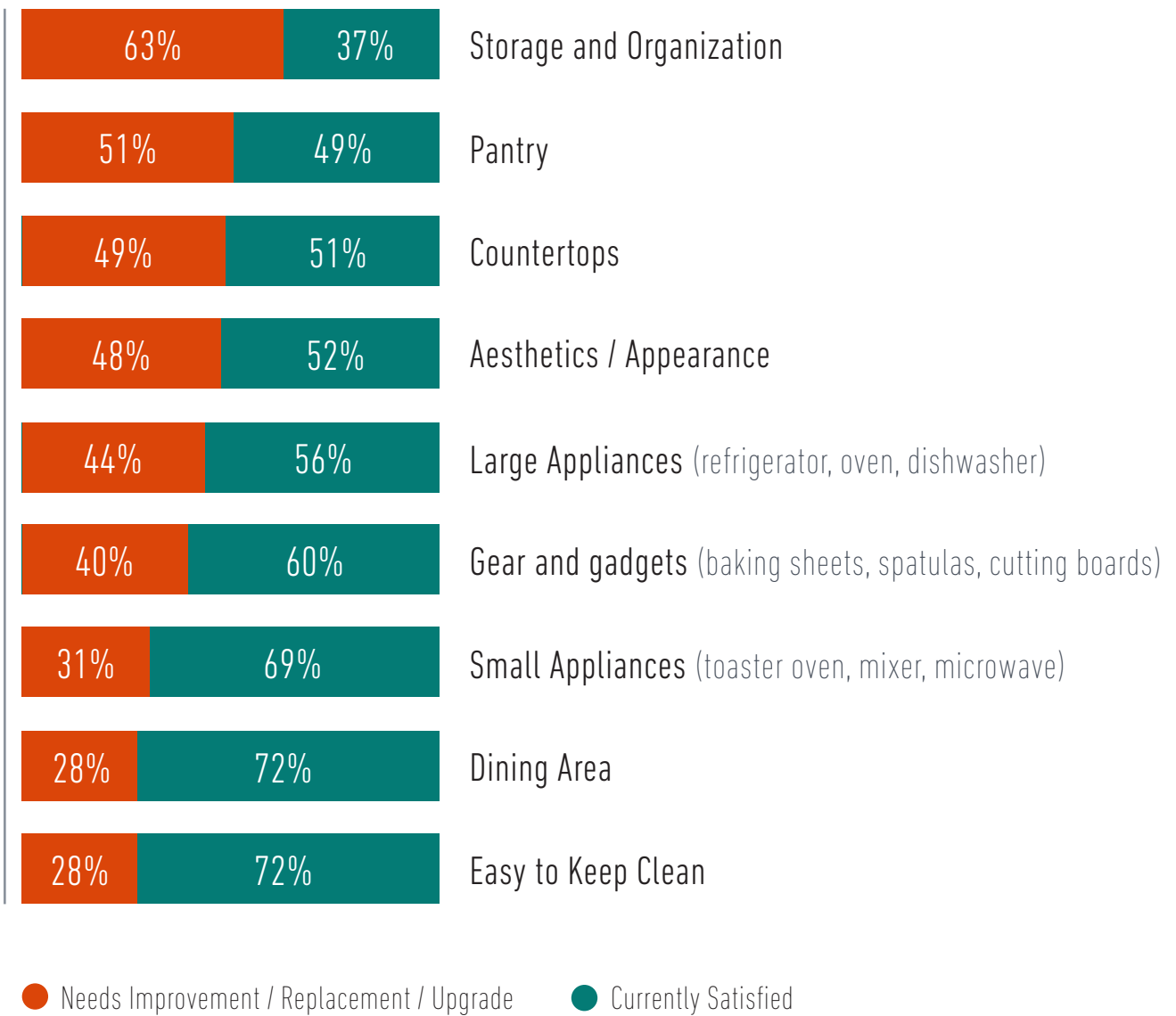
– Boomer Woman



Q. If at all, how has the pandemic affected your home cooking habits and meal preparation? Has this changed over time?

Room For Improvement

In their current kitchens, the areas in most need of improvement, replacement or upgrade are **Storage and Organization, Pantry and Countertops.**



Q. Are you currently satisfied with these aspects of your kitchen or do you feel they need improvement/upgrade/replacement?
Check one answer in each row.



Content Insights

Top Areas of Interest
Organization
Gear & Gadgets
Top Purchases: Air Fryers
Cleaning
Decor

Top Areas of Interest

When it comes to learning more about kitchen topics, the following areas of interest rated 3 or higher on a scale of 1-5.

#1



Organizing (76%)

Best ways to stay organized in your kitchen - tips on pantry, cupboards, utensils, and more.

#2



Gear & Gadgets (69%)

Learning about new appliances from multi-cookers to hand mixers.

#3



Cleaning (64%)

How to really clean different parts of your kitchen.

#4



Decor (62%)

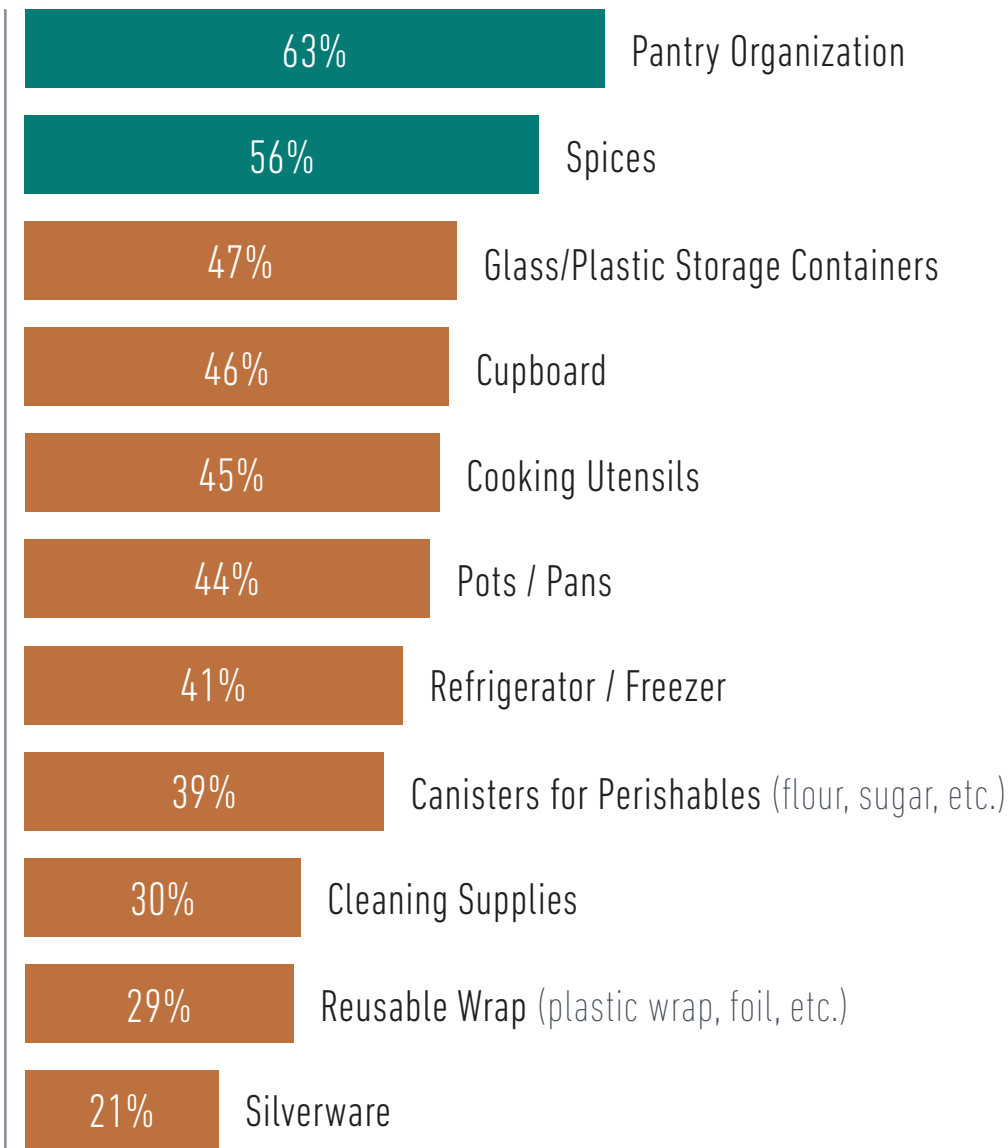
Easy upgrades to make your kitchen look great.

Q. When it comes to your kitchen, how interested are you in learning about these topic areas? Please use slider to select a number.

1= No interest and 5= A lot of interest

Organization

Pantry organization was of the highest interest to survey respondents, along with ways to keep spices and storage containers tidy and easily accessible.

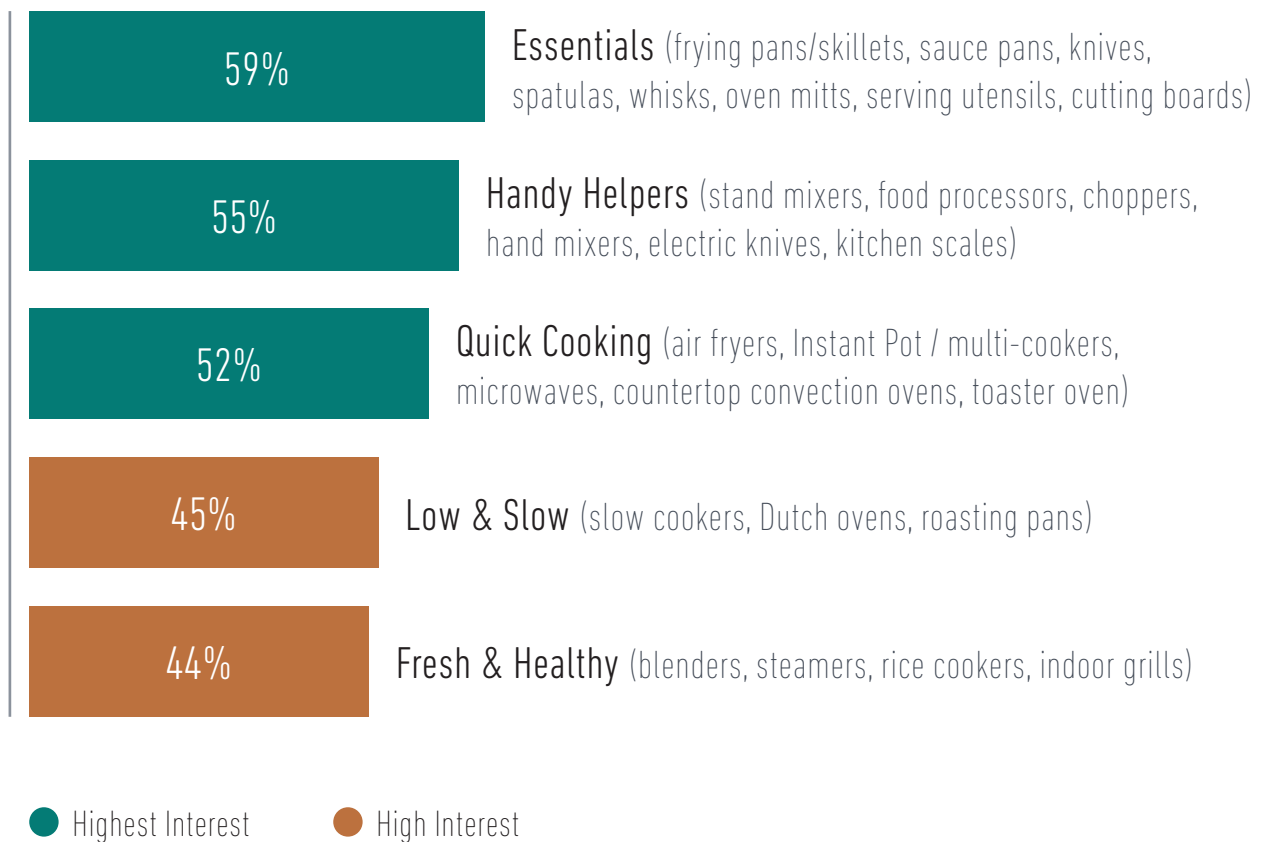


● Highest Interest ● Interested

Q. How much interest do you have in the following items when it comes to Organizing for your kitchen? Check one in each row.

Gear & Gadgets

Essentials are of most interest to Taste of Home Cooks, followed by 'Handy Helpers' such as stand mixers and food processors.

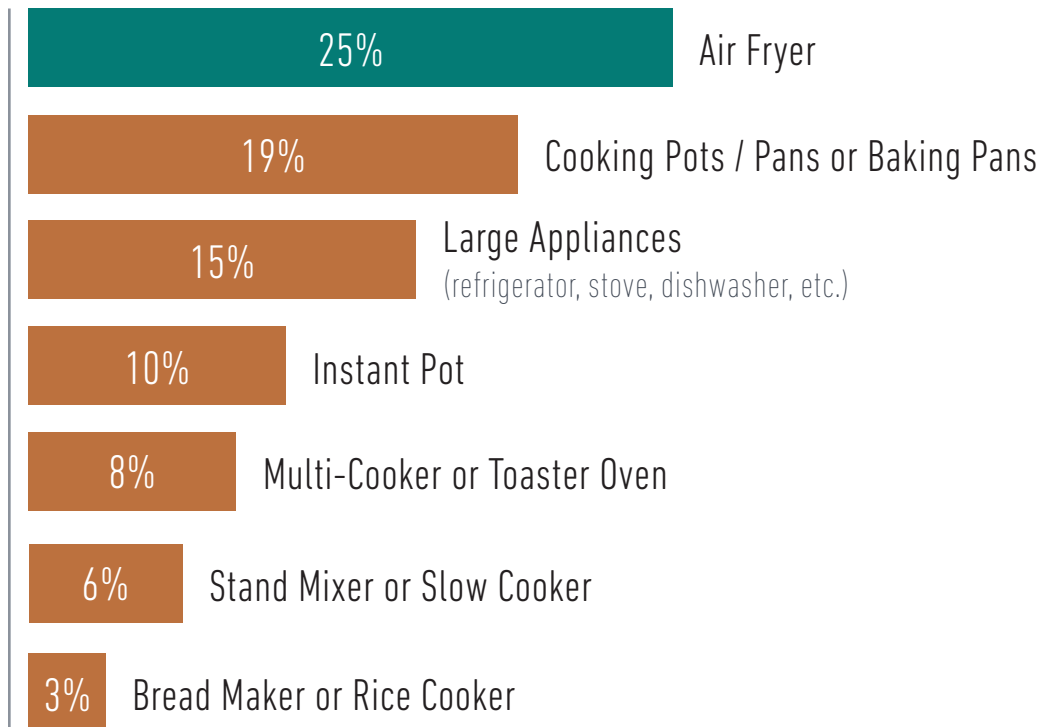


Q. How much interest do you have in the following items when it comes to Gear and Gadgets for your kitchen? Check one in each row.

Top Purchases: Air Fryers

1 in 4 purchased an air fryer during the pandemic and it is the appliance our cooks most wish to buy.

“ An **air fryer** is something I have been wanting for healthier eating. ”
– GenX Woman

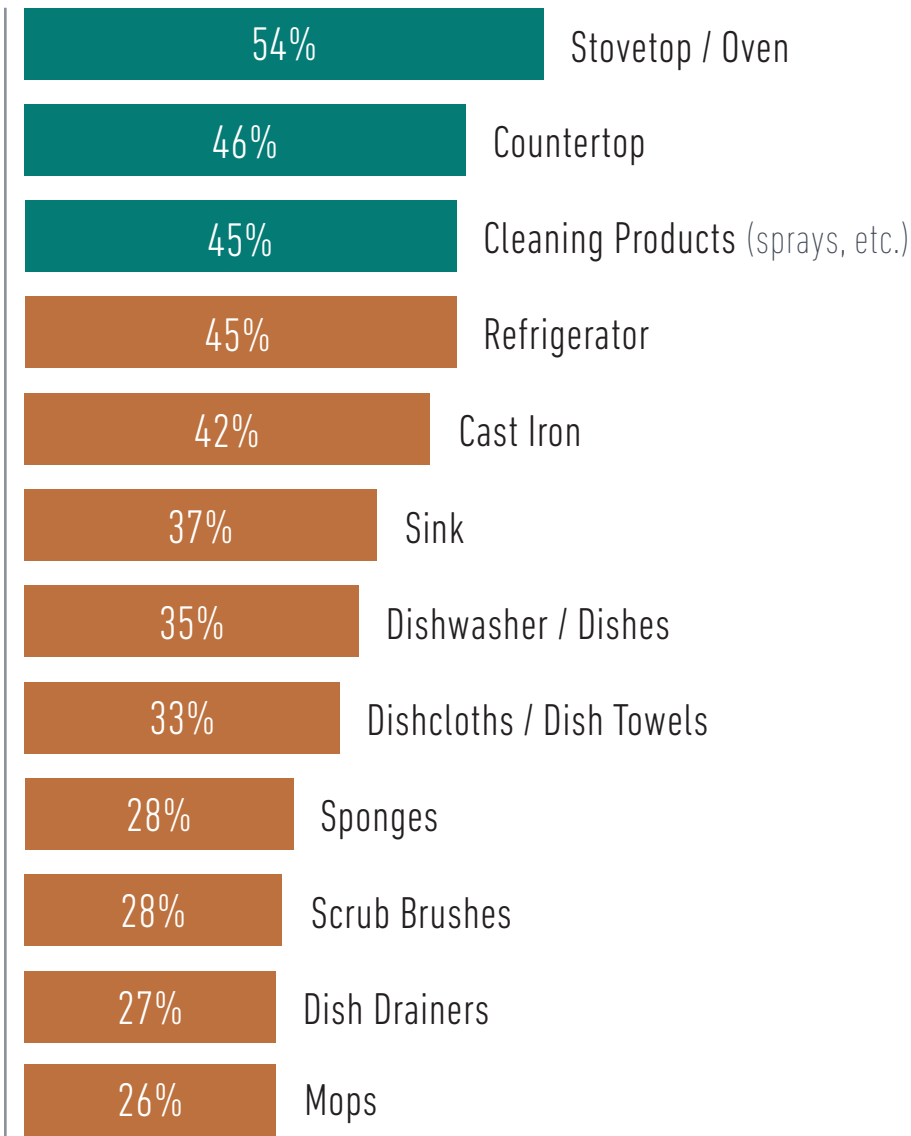


● Highest Purchase / Acquisition since onset of Pandemic
● Purchased / Acquired since onset of Pandemic

Q. Have you bought or acquired any of the following kitchen tools or appliances before the onset of the pandemic (March 2020), during the pandemic or intend to purchase any in the coming year?

Cleaning

Highest interest for Cleaning topics include **Stovetop/Oven**, **Countertop**, and **Cleaning Products**.

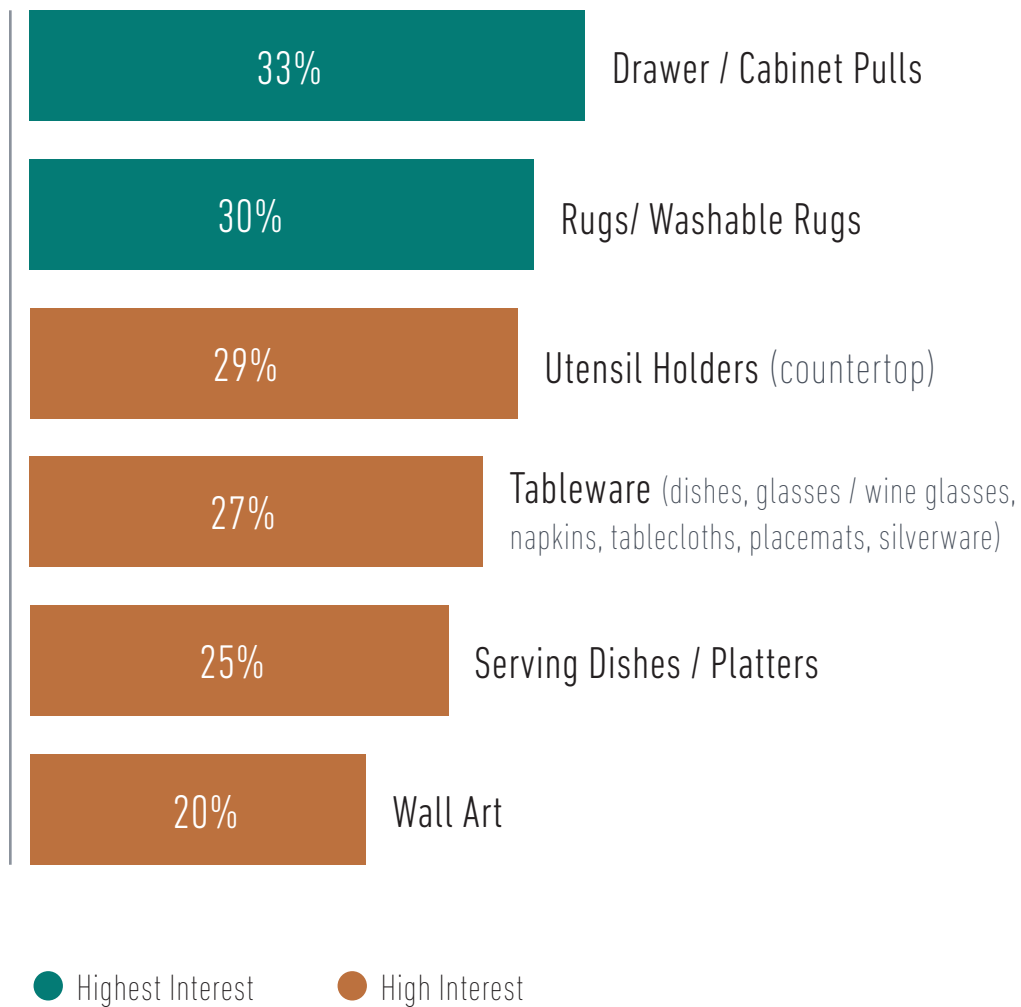


● Highest Interest ● High Interest

Q. How much interest do you have in the following topics when it comes to learning about Cleaning in your kitchen? Check one in each row.

Decor

Drawer/Cabinet Pulls and Rugs are the highest rated topics among those interested in kitchen decor.



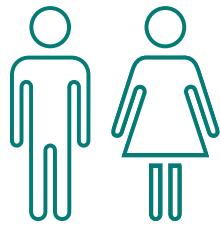
Q. How much interest do you have in the following topics when it comes to learning about Decor in your kitchen? Check one in each row.



Appendix

Respondent Demographics

Respondent Demographics



89%

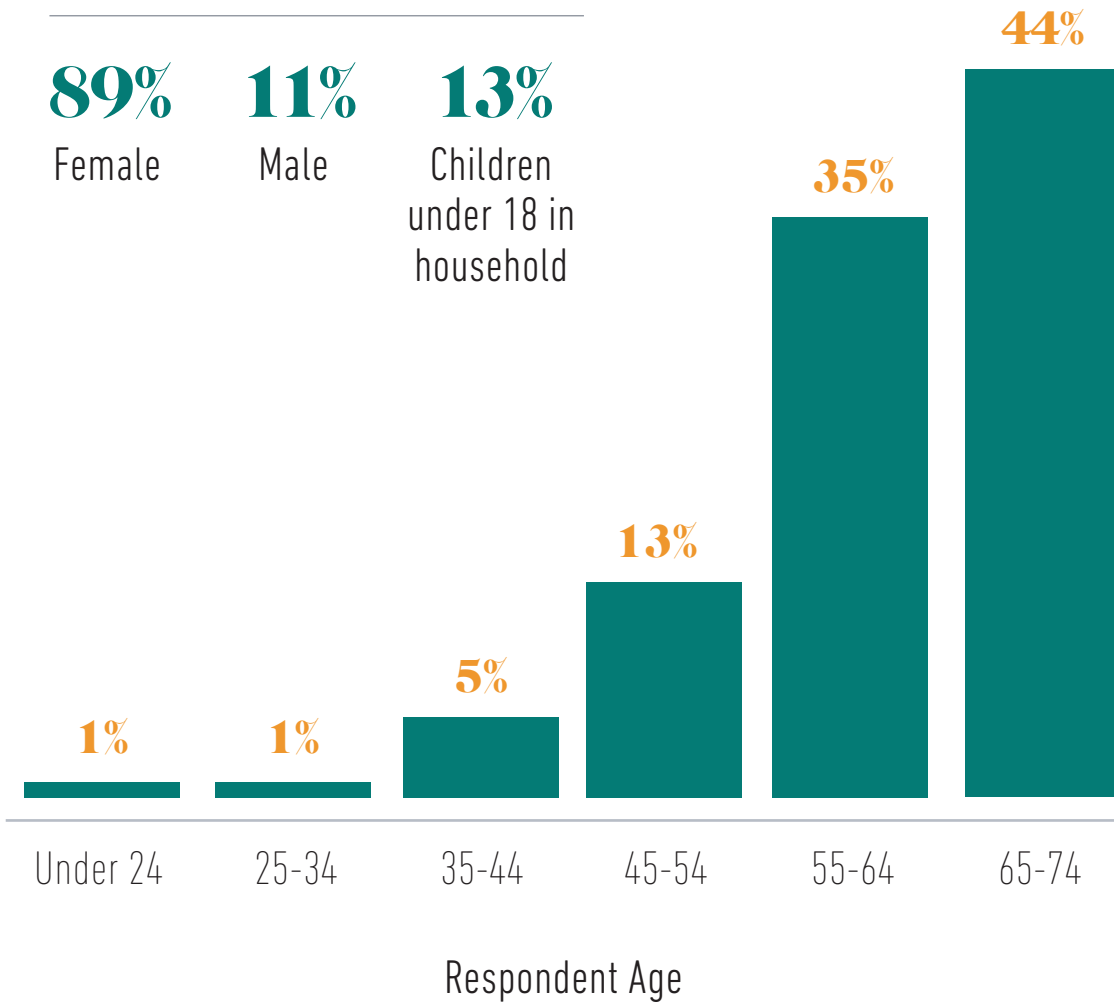
Female

11%

Male

13%

Children
under 18 in
household





Taste of Home

Taste of Home is America's most popular destination for food, cooking and entertaining. Our Test Kitchen experts select, test, taste and edit every recipe. We share thousands of home cooks' treasured family recipes every year.

Contact: Opinions@rd.com