

Zillow Zeitgeist 2025: How America searched for homes this year

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Waterfront searches climbed, flexible spaces gained momentum and comfort replaced luxury in the 2025 review of U.S. home-search behavior

SEATTLE, Dec. 17, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Lifestyle over luxury: That's the defining theme of Americans' home-search behavior in 2025. The insight comes from the [2025 Zillow ZeitgeistSM](#), an annual review of how Americans searched for homes. This year's search trends find home shoppers gravitating toward adaptable spaces and attainable comforts.

Search behavior in 2025 shifted away from square footage and high-end features toward homes that support lifestyles. Americans searched more often for proximity to water, flexible layouts that accommodate family needs and small comforts that make a home feel functional and personal.

"2025 was the year people stopped searching for more home and started searching for more meaning at home," said Amanda Pendleton, Zillow's home trends expert. "Across the country, buyers want homes that can flex for family, offer access to nature and deliver small daily comforts that make life feel easier and more joyful."

National trends that defined 2025

Drawn from millions of natural-language searches on Zillow in 2025, these trends capture the features and amenities shoppers asked for in their own words.

- Lifestyle over layout: Searches for outdoor and experience-driven features grew sharply. Interest in pool, patio, yard and view rose year over year, showing strong demand for livability over square footage.
- Water is winning: Searches for lake, dock, river, waterfront and beach rose in 2025. Even states that

historically showed little waterfront interest, like Mississippi, Montana and Oklahoma, saw notable spikes.

- Multi-use homes gained traction: Searches for ADU, guest house, casita and in-law suite grew, reflecting demand for multigenerational living, rental income potential and flexible floor plans.
- Comfort edged out luxury: Searches tied to high-end living, including mansion, luxury and acreage, cooled from 2024. Interest rose in fireplaces, garden and fenced yard, suggesting buyers want warmth, practicality and everyday comfort.
- A search for calm and control: Searches for gated, fenced yard and garden increased as buyers prioritized privacy, security and peaceful surroundings.

How searches shifted from 2024

- From home type to lifestyle: Top 2024 searches like ranch, duplex, cabin and acreage fell behind rising interest in pool, lake and waterfront.
- From utility to experience: View, patio, gym and beach grew faster than garage or land.
- From fixed to flexible: ADU and guest house rose while duplex declined slightly.
- From rustic to serene: Cabin and farm lost ground to lake and backyard-focused terms as shoppers favored nature with convenience.

State and regional highlights

Zillow Zeitgeist also highlights how local preferences shape home-shopping behavior, revealing the unique search terms that define each state's version of the perfect home.

Unique state standouts

- Alaska: Hangar and four-plex searches reflect aviation lifestyles and practical multifamily needs.
- New Mexico: Adobe remained a top search, underscoring deep appreciation for regional architecture.
- Michigan: Land contract searches highlight unique local financing traditions.
- New York and New Jersey: Mother-daughter homes remained popular for multigenerational living.
- Arizona: RV gate and casita searches showed strong interest in flexible Southwestern home styles.
- Hawaii: Fee simple searches reflected buyers navigating the state's ownership structure.

Regional patterns

- Southwest: Strong clusters of ADU, casita, guest house and solar.
- Mountain West: Continued interest in ranch, horses, river and acreage.
- Coastal states: Beach, oceanfront, dock, balcony and gated community dominated.
- Heartland: Barndominium, pole barn and acreage searches grew across Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Kentucky.

- Pacific Northwest: ADU, modern, view, yard and waterfront remained common.

To see more trends, users can explore these search patterns at both the national and state levels [here](#).

Methodology

Zillow Zeitgeist analyzes aggregated search activity on Zillow across calendar year 2025, surfacing national themes and state-level patterns from commonly searched keywords and year-over-year shifts. The 2025 narrative and thematic framing derive from this search dataset and creative synthesis developed for press and owned channels.

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