

# 2005 survey respondents describe the ideal home

By Associated Designs

People love their homes, and many also enjoy envisioning their ideal home. That's exactly what we asked our readers to do early this year in our 2005 Homes from the Heart Survey. The following preferences emerged from participating readers nationwide.

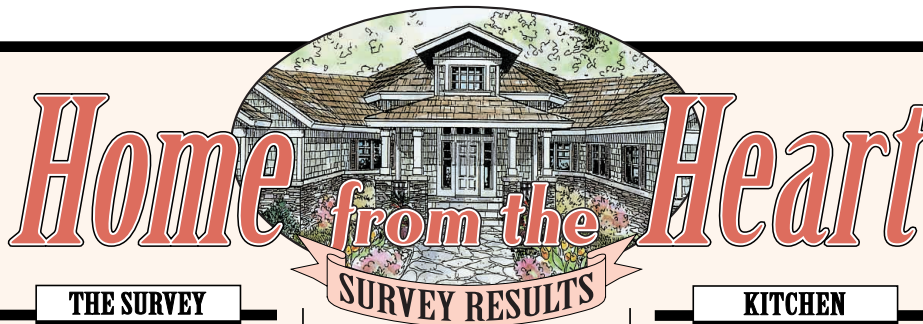
Looking at size, the 2,000-3,000 square foot home took top honors, with the 1,500-2,000 running a close second. While a traditional exterior was most preferred, country and ranch styling were the next two most-picked styles. As for exterior cladding, more than 70 percent wanted brick or stone. Wood exteriors are still popular, but only 40 percent asked for them.

One-story homes were the hands down favorite, and more than half wanted a basement. The great room is in high demand. Nearly 75 percent opted for this kind of family gathering space, with the kitchen open to the living and dining area. Less than a quarter now want a formal dining room, but nearly half do want a home office. That one edges up a bit every year.

Ample storage is actually the highest ranked priority. Desire for a master suite walk-in closet and a kitchen pantry fell in the 80 percent range, while garage storage came in just a shade under that.

Three bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms are the average, and right around 75 percent want a deck or patio, along with a wood stove or fireplace.

For the first time, we asked readers how much control they thought local governments should have over land use and home appearance. More than half felt that building departments should exert limited control over development, and confine themselves to setting up zoning guidelines.



## THE SURVEY

Every year in February, Associated Designs sends a survey to over 750 subscribing newspapers across the continent, to discover the public's current preferences in home design. This year's results are presented here. This information was also used to create the Heartcrest, the crowd-pleasing 2005 Home from the Heart.

## BUILDING ISSUES

Local building departments are beginning to exert more control over the architectural aspects of new buildings—not just enforcing safety codes, but guiding the "look and feel" of new projects. How much control should local governments have in guiding the land use and appearance of a project?

- LESS CONTROL**
- 12% Individual builders and market forces should determine how property is developed, with no local government involvement.
  - 40% Building departments should exert limited control over development by creating zoning guidelines for how property can be used.
  - 20% Building departments should set general standards for things like maximum garage width, minimum roof slope and exterior finish materials.
  - 2% Building departments should set standards for all design considerations including architectural elements.
  - 3% Building departments should have an architectural review board, with complete control over property use and project design.
- MORE CONTROL**

## TYPE OF HOME

**Size of Home:**  
 14% less than 1500 sq. ft.  
 31% 1500–2000 sq. ft.  
 37% 2000–3000 sq. ft.  
 18% 3000 sq. ft. and up

**Number of Floors:**  
 65% 1 story  
 36% 2 stories  
 53% Basement  
 19% Wheelchair Accessible

**Budget: \$241,000**

**Exterior Style:**  
 45% Traditional  
 38% Country  
 34% Ranch  
 13% Contemporary  
 17% New England  
 21% Craftsman  
 13% European  
 5% Mediterranean/Spanish  
 17% Victorian  
 21% Cottage  
 11% Other

**Exterior Material:**  
 42% Wood  
 72% Brick/Stone  
 23% Stucco  
 26% Vinyl/Aluminum  
 8% Other

**Exterior Wall Construction:**  
 65% Wood  
 30% Masonry  
 20% Steel  
 3% Other

## LIVING AREAS

**Number of Bedrooms: 3.2**  
**Number of Baths: 2.6**  
 50% Formal Entry  
 23% Formal Living  
 35% Formal Dining  
 73% Great Room (Open Living/Dining/Kitchen)  
 38% Family Room  
 21% Theater Room  
 22% Recreation Room  
 34% Guest Suite  
 47% Office  
 38% Den/Library  
 39% Sunroom  
 23% Bonus Room  
 9% Other

## UTILITY ROOM

68% Adjacent to Kitchen/Garage  
 14% Adjacent to Bedrooms  
 1% In Garage or Basement

## KITCHEN

72% Open to Family Room  
 48% Adjacent to Garage  
 59% Breakfast Nook  
 81% Pantry  
 50% Eating Bar  
 65% Island  
 29% Appliance Center  
 34% Garden Window  
 20% Desk  
 48% Double Oven  
 27% Vegetable Sink  
 28% Trash Compactor  
 17% Television  
 8% Other

## MASTER SUITE

**Best Location:**  
 77% Main Floor  
 14% Upper Floor  
 74% Isolated from Other Bedrooms  
 11% Adjacent to Other Bedrooms

**Suite Features:**  
 89% Walk-in Closet  
 32% Outside Access  
 41% Sitting Room  
 3% Other

## GARAGE

**Number of Cars: 2.2**  
 78% Storage  
 42% Shop  
 12% RV Parking

## EXTRAS

**Interior:**  
 73% Fireplace/Woodstove  
 54% Vaulted Ceilings  
 46% Skylights  
 10% Computer Center  
 19% Wet/Service Bar  
 18% Swimming Pool  
 8% Other

**Exterior:**  
 73% Front Porch  
 76% Deck/Patio  
 36% Screened Porch  
 19% Courtyard  
 23% Fireplace  
 35% Spa/Hot Tub  
 27% Water Feature  
 6% Other

## HOUSEHOLDS

**Number of people: 3.1**  
**Average age: 41.6 years**  
 Plan to build a home: 80%  
 Plan to buy a home: 16%  
 Timeframe: 2.1 years