

WHAT FUTURE HOLDS FOR HOMES

ORLANDO (Real Estate Center) – The home of the future doesn't include Jetson-style hovercrafts or robotic maids — yet — but there are some key changes worth looking for if you're a builder.

Based on responses to a recent survey by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), here are some ways in which builders can expect homes to change by as early as 2015:

- Single-family homes will get smaller (74 percent of respondents said).
- Homes will have more “green” features (68 percent).
- Homes will have more technology features (29 percent).
- Homes will have more universal access features (20 percent).
- Homes will have more outdoor living features, such as kitchens and fireplaces (10 percent).
- The average home size will be roughly 2,150 sf.
- Living rooms will merge with other spaces in the home (52 percent), vanish to save on square footage (30 percent), or become a parlor/retreat/library or music room (13 percent).
- If the living room doesn't vanish, it will likely decrease in size (76 percent).
- Also downsizing are the entry foyer (66 percent) and dining room (63 percent).
- Features “very likely” to be included in a new home in 2015 include a kitchen-living room combo (“great room”), walk-in closet in master bedroom, laundry room and two-car garage.
- “Unlikely” features include three or more bathrooms, mudroom, unheated porch, dining room, skylights, three-car garage, four or more bedrooms, media room and two master bedroom suites.
- Homebuyers are “somewhat likely” to want universal design features such as stepless entries, three-foot-wide doorways and four-foot-wide hallways, stepless showers that have seating, non-slip floor surfaces and grab bars in bathrooms.
- People seem likely to lavish more attention on the kitchen, ensuring that room will retain its status as the home's social center. Survey respondents said they are “very likely” to want double sinks, recessed lighting, table space for eating and breakfast bars. They're “somewhat likely” to want a central island, walk-in pantry, recycling center and desk/computer area.