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**Redfin Survey: Struggling Young Renters Forego Restaurants, Skip Meals to Afford Rent**

*But there are bright spots emerging on the affordability horizon, which could make it easier for young Americans to afford housing in the near future*

SEATTLE — August 25, 2025 — Seven in 10 Gen Z and millennial renters struggle to afford their regular housing payments, as do 41% of homeowners in that age group, according to a new [report](#) from [Redfin](#), the real estate brokerage powered by Rocket.

This report is based on survey results from a Redfin-commissioned survey conducted by Ipsos in May 2025, fielded to more than 4,000 U.S. homeowners and renters. The report focuses on the nearly 2,000 respondents who said they struggle to afford housing, broken down by generation and whether they own or rent. Survey respondents were considered to struggle with housing payments if they selected “I struggle greatly to afford them,” “I regularly struggle, but sometimes okay,” or “I sometimes struggle, but generally okay.”

Baby boomers and Gen Xers are less likely to struggle, but 52% of baby boomer *renters* and over two-thirds of Gen X renters report having a hard time making their regular housing payments.

Of the Gen Z and millennial renters who struggle to afford housing, 40% are eating out at restaurants less often to make their monthly rent payments, making it the most common sacrifice among that group. The next-most common sacrifice is taking no or fewer vacations; nearly one-third of Gen Z and millennial renters selected that option. Next: borrowing money from family or friends (27%) and working extra shifts (25%).

More than one in five (22%) young renters report skipping meals completely to make their monthly payments, 22% have sold their belongings, and 19% have delayed medical treatments.

Struggling millennials and Gen Zers who *own* their homes are more likely than those who rent to sacrifice luxuries, namely eating out at restaurants (43%) and taking vacations (36%). But they’re less likely to sacrifice necessities: Just about one in 10 (11%) report skipping meals completely to make mortgage payments, and 13% have delayed medical treatments.

Older Americans are also most likely to sacrifice nice-to-haves like eating out at restaurants and taking vacations to afford housing. Nearly half (45%) of both baby boomer and Gen X homeowners say they ate out at restaurants less often to afford their mortgage, and roughly two in five of both groups took no or fewer vacations.

It’s difficult for many Americans to afford their housing payments because even though wages have increased, the cost of buying a home has increased more. The median U.S. home-sale price has increased more than 40% since just before the pandemic and mortgage rates have roughly doubled; meanwhile, wages have increased by about 28% over that period. The median U.S. asking rent rose by [roughly 22%](#) over that period.

It's particularly difficult for young Americans to afford housing because they typically earn less money than older generations because they're at the start of their career. They're also more likely to have student loan debt, and [less likely](#) to have equity from a previous home.

“Many Gen Zers and millennials are making real sacrifices—picking up side gigs, selling their possessions, even delaying doctor’s appointments—just to pay for the basic need of housing,” said Daryl Fairweather, Redfin’s chief economist. “At the same time, a lot of the young people who can easily afford housing can do so because they have major financial support from their parents, with roughly [one-quarter](#) of the young Americans who recently bought a home using family money for their down payments. With the cost of buying a home rising much faster than wages, people without access to family money are much more likely to struggle to pay for housing—which could widen the gap between the haves and the have-nots in the future.”

### **Affordability Has Started Improving in Some Parts of the U.S.**

There are some [bright spots](#) emerging on the affordability horizon. Mortgage rates have dropped to a 10-month low, buyers have [more purchasing power](#), and fewer homes are selling above asking price. Redfin agents report many sellers are willing to negotiate as they take note of today’s buyer’s market, in which there are hundreds of thousands [more home sellers](#) than buyers.

Affordability has started to improve in several major metro areas, too. The income needed to afford the median-priced local home has [declined](#) from a year ago in 11 of the biggest metros in the U.S., including parts of California and Florida.

“A lot of renters are making the jump into homeownership,” said [Jim Fletcher](#), a [Redfin Premier](#) agent in Tampa, FL. “The local market is slow, with builders offering incentives to entice people to buy and individual sellers willing to negotiate because there’s so much supply on the market. It’s a good time for people early in their careers to start building equity; they can get homes for less than they could have a few years ago—especially if they’re open to condos or townhouses.”

To view the full report, including full survey results and additional methodology details, please visit: <https://www.redfin.com/news/millennial-gen-z-sacrifices-to-afford-rent>

### **About Redfin**

Redfin is a technology-driven real estate company with the country's most-visited real estate brokerage website. As part of Rocket Companies (NYSE: RKT), Redfin is creating an integrated homeownership platform from search to close to make the dream of homeownership more affordable and accessible for everyone. Redfin’s clients can see homes first with on-demand tours, easily apply for a home loan with Rocket Mortgage, and save thousands in fees while working with a top local agent.

You can find more information about Redfin and get the latest housing market data and research at [Redfin.com/news](#). For more information about Rocket Companies, visit [RocketCompanies.com](#).

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