

AMERICA AT HOME

Findings from a survey of 1,000 U.S. adults on homeownership, the home-buying process, the home foreclosure crisis and foreclosure prevention

Prepared by Widmeyer Communications for NeighborWorks America

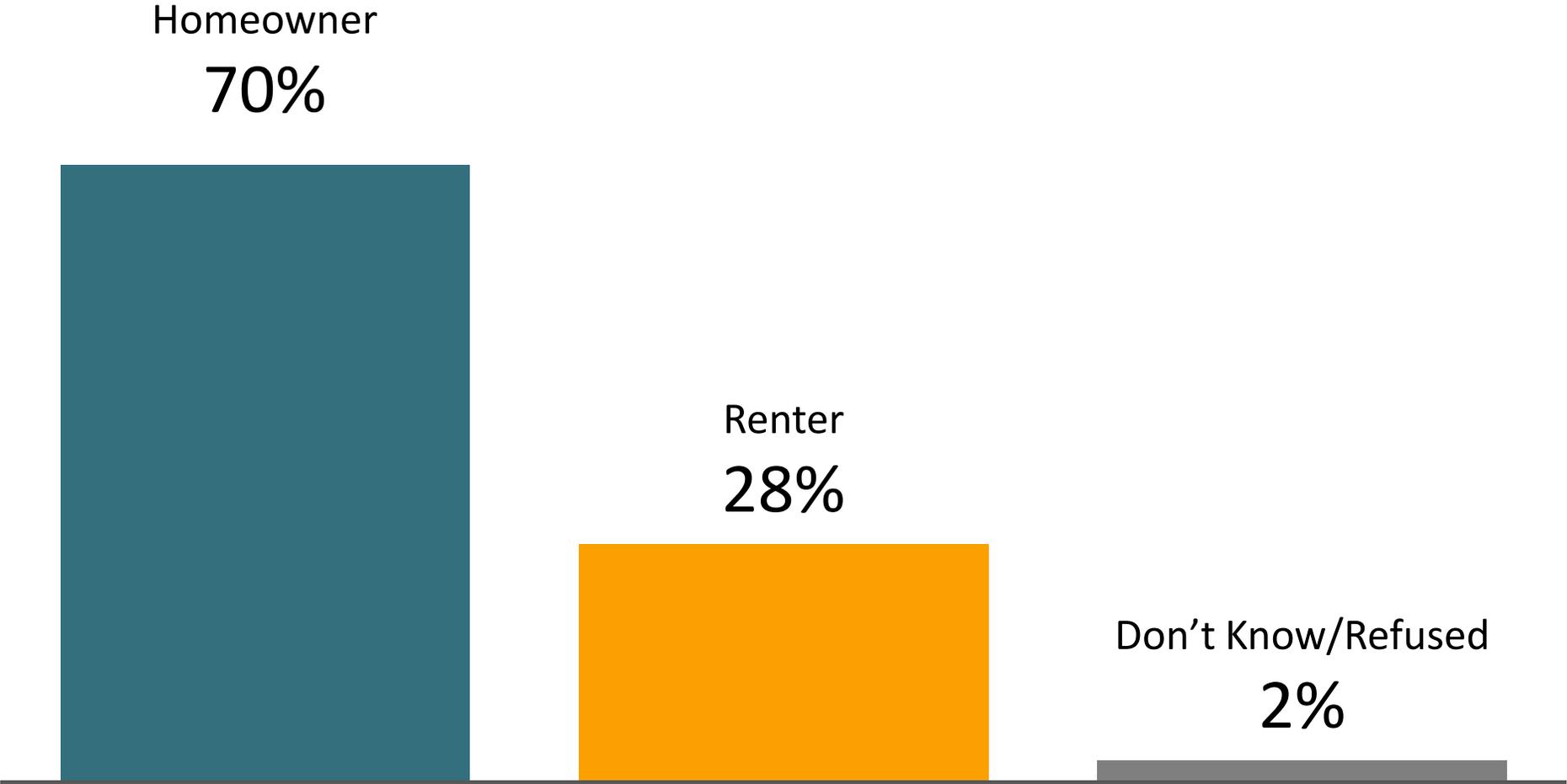
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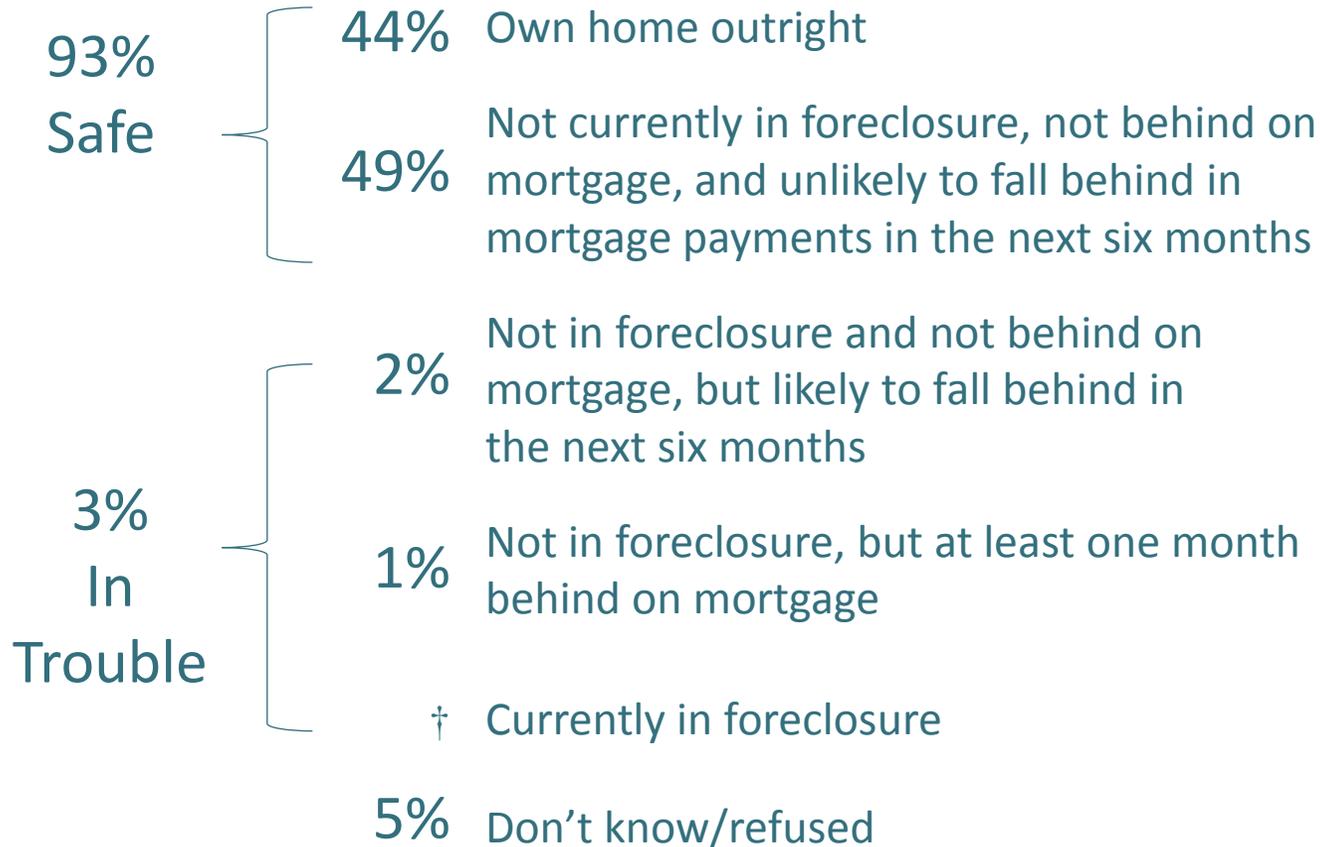
Current Housing Status

Seven in 10 (70%) adults own their own homes and 28% are renters



Homeowners' profile

State of Mortgage



Additional Stats

- 62% of homeowners say they escrow their insurance and property taxes, 29% do not and 11% are not sure.
- Homeowners tend to be older than other U.S. adults – 56% of homeowners are 55 or older (compared to 49% of adults overall).
- Homeowners also tend to be wealthier and more well-educated than renters.
- 73% of whites own their homes compared to 65% of Hispanics and 55% of blacks.

NOTES:

- † = <0.5%
- Total adds to >100% due to rounding

Renters' profile

Considering Purchasing a Home?

Considering (total)	42%
Within the next year	16%
One to three years	15%
Over three years	11%
Not considering	55%

Additional Stats

- Compared to homeowners, renters tend to be younger, less well-educated and have lower incomes.
- African-Americans (44%) are more likely to be renters than Hispanics (30%) or whites (25%)
- Rentership is highest in large urban areas (44%) and lowest in small towns and rural areas (23%)

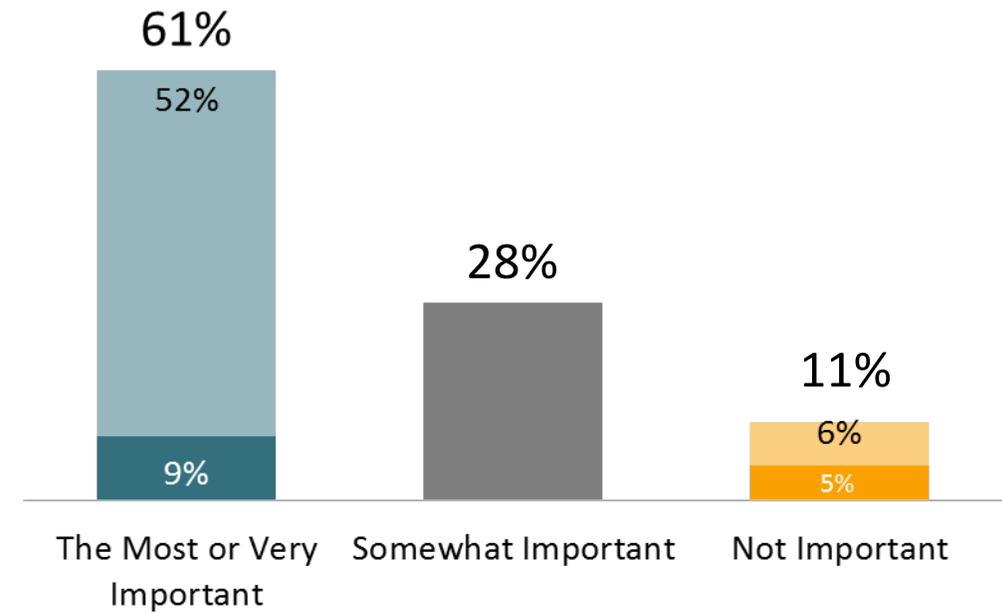


Views on Homeownership

Homeownership is viewed by 88% of people to be an important part of the 'American dream.' However, slightly more than half say it is not critical to success.

- Renters (50%) are less likely than current homeowners (65%) to say that owning a home is central to the American dream.
 - Among renters, those who are considering buying a home are more likely than those who are not to consider homeownership a key part of the American dream.
- African-Americans (78%) are especially likely to consider owning a home the most or a very important part of the American dream.
- People living in major urban centers (51%), and Westerners (51%) are less likely than others to consider homeownership a key part of the American dream.
- Other responses suggest that homeownership is not the be-all-and-end-all. A majority (55%) *disagree* with the statement, "I would feel less successful if I never owned a home."

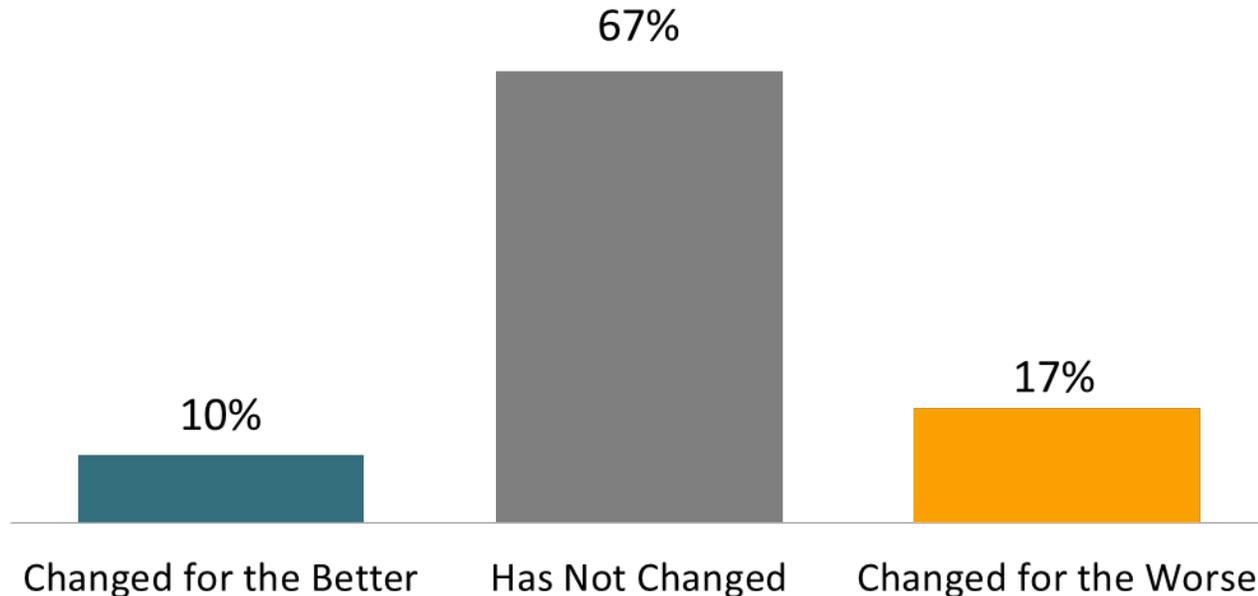
How important a part of the American dream is owning a home?



Darker colors=intensity

Two-thirds of adults say their opinion of homeownership has not changed over the past five years. Those whose opinions have shifted are more likely to say it has changed for the worse.

Has your overall opinion of homeownership changed in the past five years?



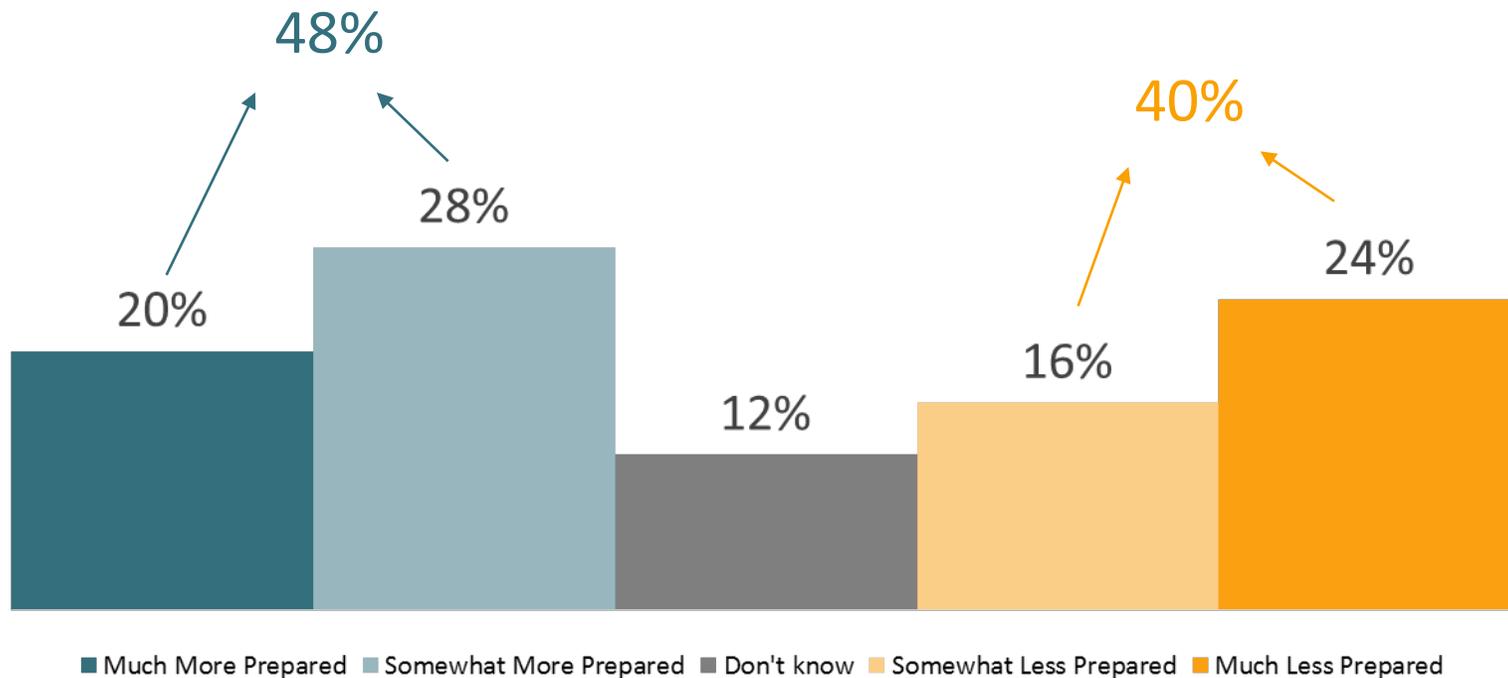
- Renters (37%) are more likely than homeowners (23%) to report that their opinions on homeownership have changed in the past five years. In addition, renters are more likely than homeowners to report both positive (14% vs. 8% of homeowners) and negative changes (23% vs. 15%).



Home Buying and the Home-Buying Process

U.S. adults are divided about whether they feel more or less prepared to purchase a home compared to 5 years ago. One in eight (12%) don't know.

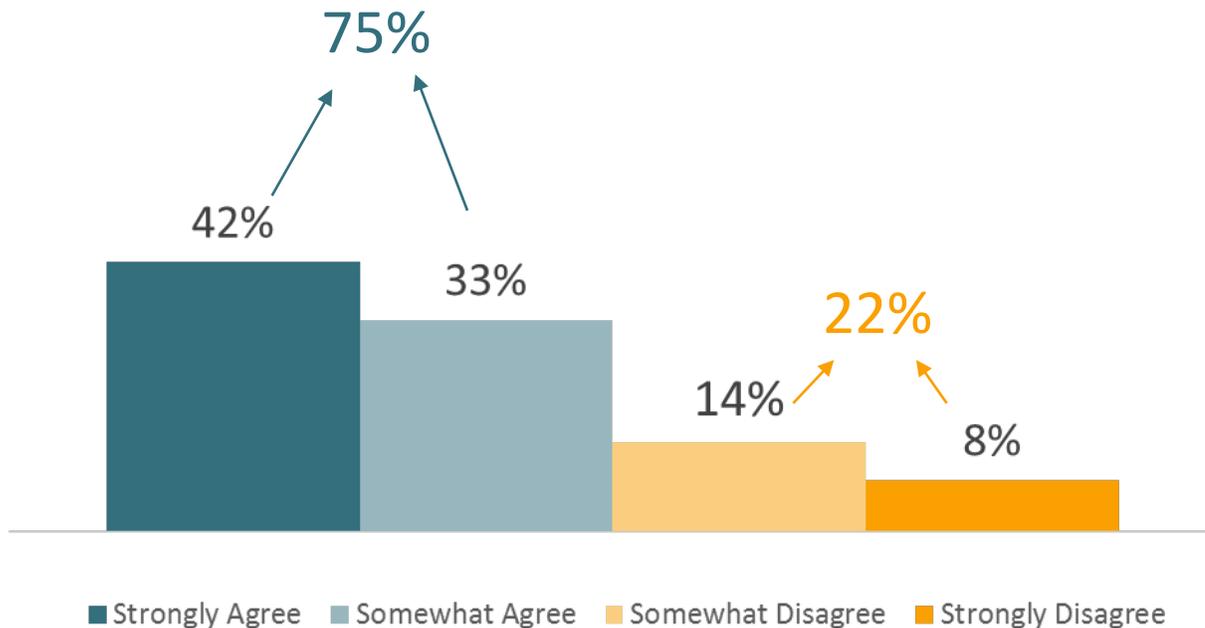
Compared to five years ago, do you feel more or less prepared to purchase a home?



- Renter are equally likely to say they are more (47%) and less (48%) prepared.
- Groups that tend to feel less prepared:
 - Women (45% less prepared, including 26% much less prepared)
 - Americans 55 and older (47%/29%), perhaps reflecting the fact that most currently own homes
 - Those with incomes under \$40,000 (55%/38%) and without a college degree (51%/33%)

Most people agree that the home-buying process is complicated

Agree or Disagree: The home-buying process is complicated

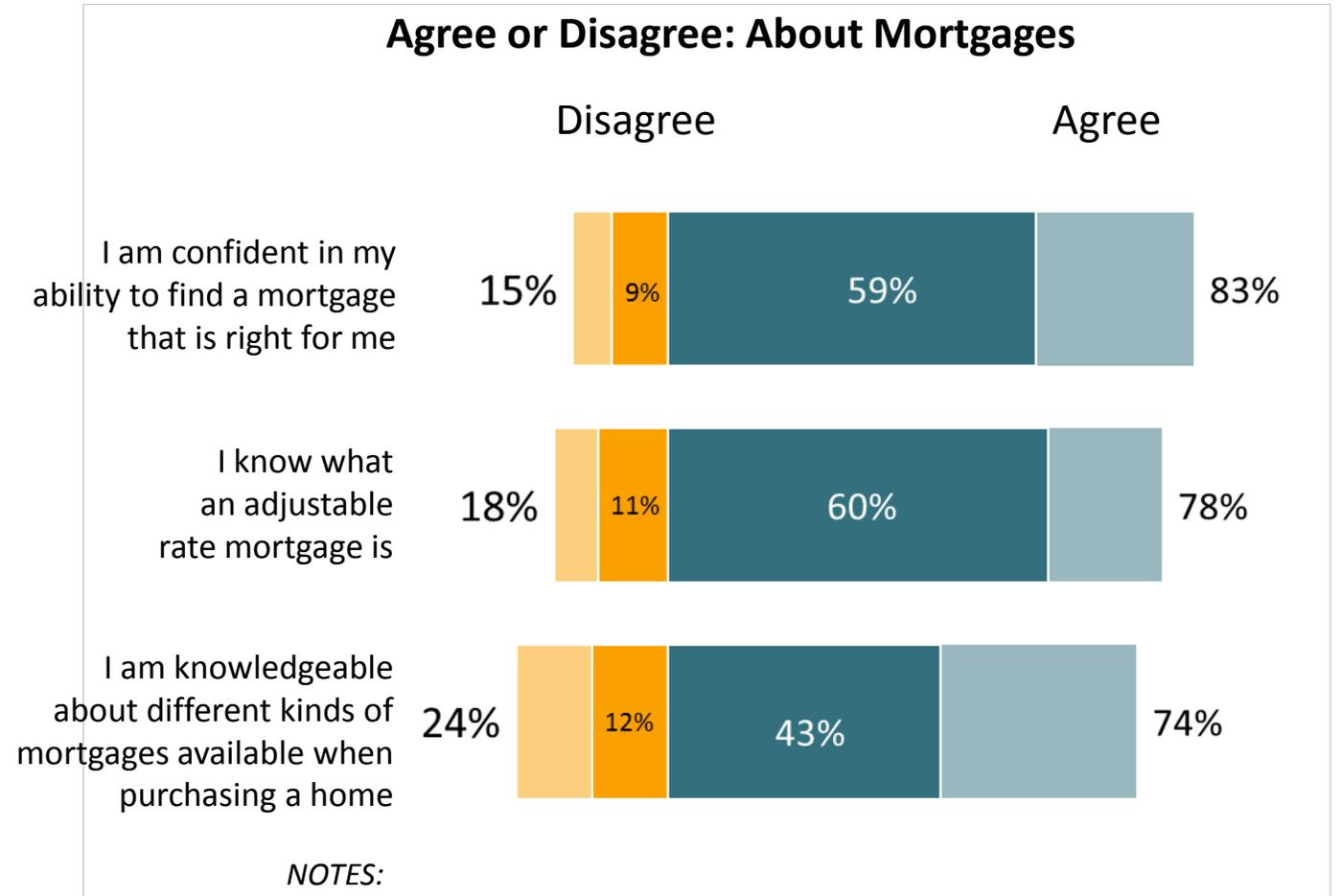


- Large majorities of both renters and homeowners consider the home buying process complicated. Renters (80%) are more likely to feel this way than homeowners (73%).
- Renters who are not currently considering buying a home are especially likely to find the process intimidating (87% feel the process is complicated). Renters considering a home purchase are slightly more comfortable with the process (75%).
- Interestingly, African Americans are less likely than whites or Hispanics to say they find the home buying process complicated (65% of African Americans vs. 77% of whites and 77% of Hispanics).

Don't Know/Refused not shown

Most adults say they are knowledgeable about the different mortgage types, but one in four say they are not

- Majorities of renters are confident in their ability to find the right mortgage (73%), say they know what an ARM is (62%), and say they are knowledgeable about different mortgages types (62%).
 - Overall, however, renters are less confident and knowledgeable than homeowners.
 - Among renters, those who are considering purchasing a home are somewhat more knowledgeable and confident than those who are not considering a purchase.
- Groups most likely to lack confidence and knowledge about mortgages issues:
 - Americans under 30 and over 75
 - Those without a college education and with incomes under \$40,000



Friends and family top the list of sources for advice on purchasing a home, followed by the Internet and real-estate agents. There appears to be a lack of awareness of housing counselors.

When you think about purchasing a home, which of the following would be the first place you would turn to for advice?

Asked of renters considering purchasing a home

Friends and family who are homeowners	39%
Internet search	17%
Real-estate agent	16%
Mortgage lender	9%
Non-profit homeownership advisor	5%
Housing counselor	3%
Religious organization	1%
Other (Volunteered)	6%
Don't know (Volunteered)	4%

When asked about the greatest obstacles they foresee to buying a home, people give a variety of responses.

- Renters are more likely than homeowners to list as their top obstacle the inability to buy in a preferred area (20% vs. 10%) and weak or bad credit (13% vs. 4%).
- Homeowners are somewhat more concerned than renters about maintenance and repair costs and the future of the mortgage interest deduction.

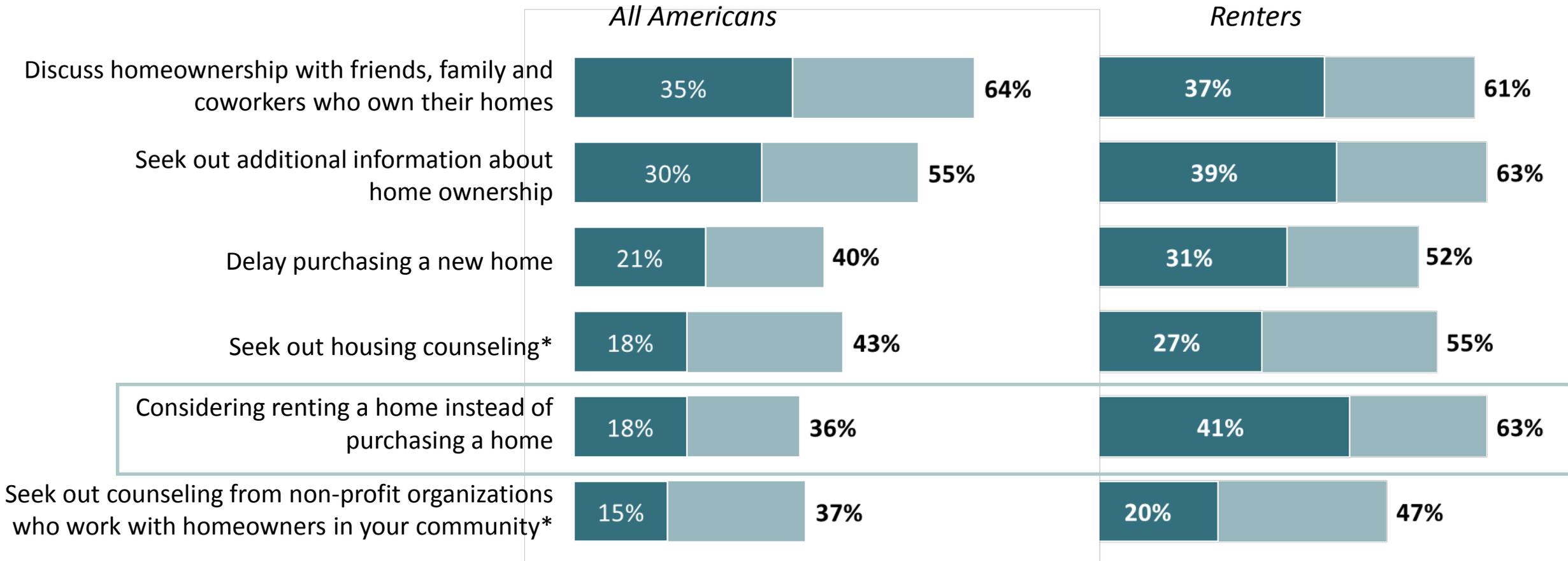
<i>If thinking about buying a house, which of the following is the greatest obstacle to you personally</i>	Total	Home-owners	Renters
Lack of job security	14%	14%	14%
Lack of a down payment	13%	11%	17%
Belief that you don't earn enough to buy a home in a neighborhood in which you want to live	13%	10%	20%
Concerns about the future of the mortgage interest deduction	9%	11%	5%
Concerns about maintenance and repair costs	8%	10%	5%
Weak or bad credit	7%	4%	13%
Believe that a home is not a good investment right now	6%	5%	9%
Other (Volunteered)	14%	16%	9%
Don't know (Volunteered)	10%	12%	5%
Not thinking of buying a home (Volunteered)	7%	8%	4%



Trying to Prevent Foreclosures

Many people say the home foreclosure crisis has increased their likelihood of some behaviors. Over half of renters (63%) say the crisis has made them consider renting a home instead of purchasing a home.

Increased Likelihood of Behaviors Due to Home Foreclosure Crisis



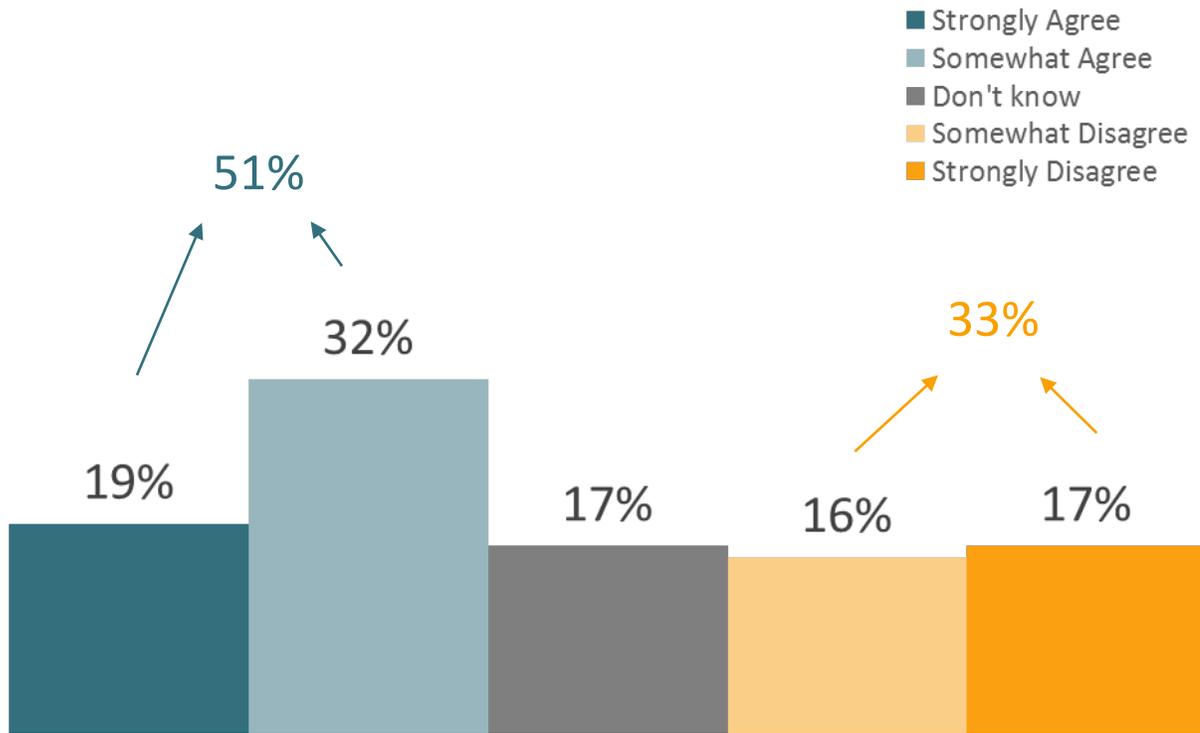
• *=asked of half sample

■ Much More Likely ■ Somewhat More Likely

People are confused about whether you need to pay for foreclosure help. Yet being charged for this service is a sign of a scam.

Agree or Disagree:

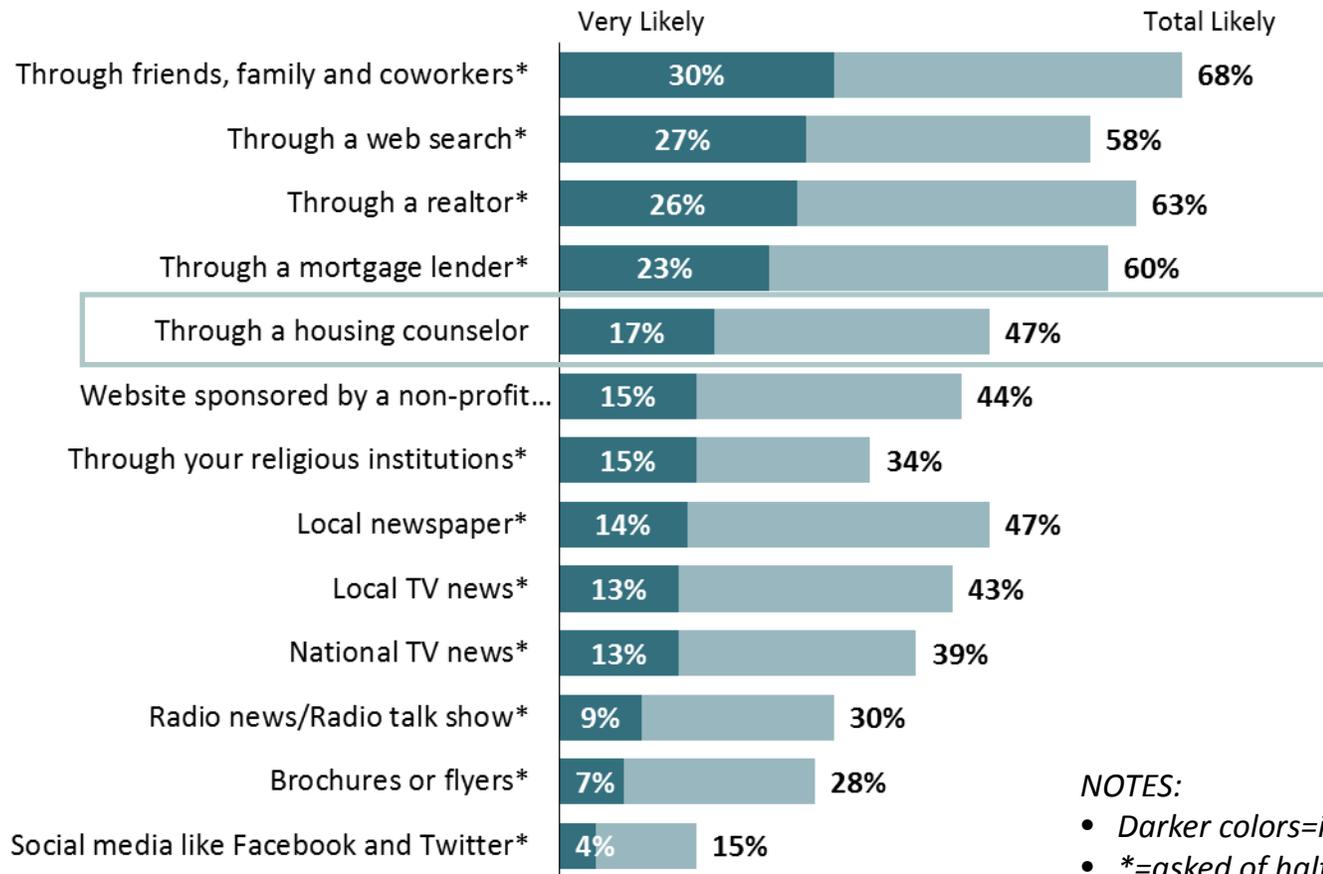
The free help available to avoid home foreclosure is as good as the help you pay to receive.



- African -Americans (69%) are more likely to agree that the free help is on par with help you pay to receive than whites (49%) and Hispanics (45%).
- Americans age 75 and older are less trusting of free help; 42% disagree that the free help available is as good as the help you pay to receive.
- Only a few participants (n=19) reported being in foreclosure (N=2) behind on their mortgage (n=5), or foresee falling behind within the next six months (n=12). Of these individuals, 12 (63%) believe the free help is as good as help you pay for.

Friends and family, the Internet, real-estate agents and mortgage lenders top the list of sources adults would turn to for information on foreclosure. Just under half are likely to turn to housing counselors.

Likelihood of Turning to Various Sources for Information about Home Foreclosure Prevention and Preventing Loan Scams



NOTES:

- Darker colors=intensity
- *=asked of half sample

- A majority of renters (56%) say they are likely to turn to a housing counselor compared to 43% of homeowners.
- Groups most likely to turn to housing counselors:
 - African Americans (71% likely, including 38% very likely)
 - Under age 30 (63%/23%)
- Groups least likely to turn to housing counselors:
 - Those living in small town and rural areas – 59% say they are unlikely to turn to a housing counselor including 37% who say they are very unlikely to do so.

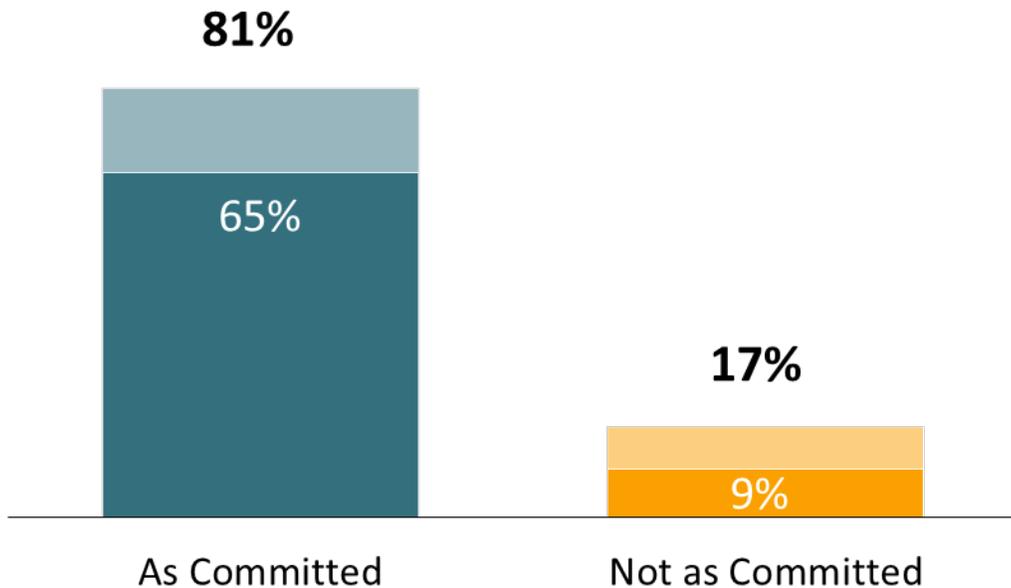


Renters and Renting

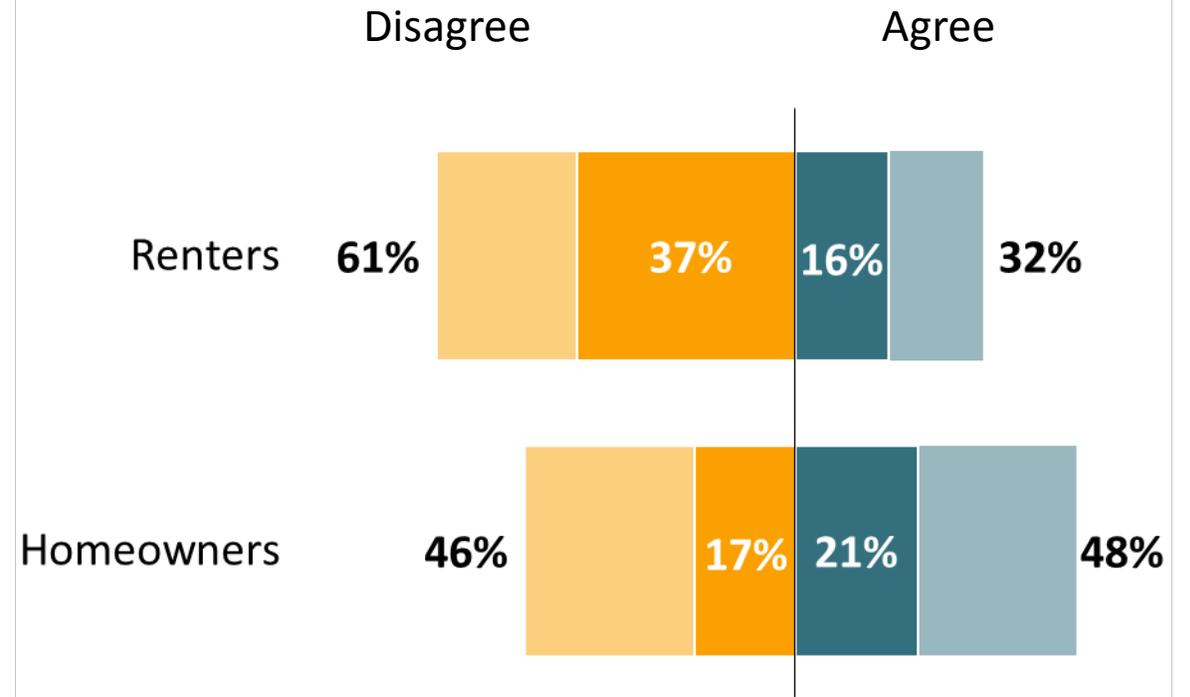
Most renters say they are as committed to their homes and surroundings as they would be if they were owners. Homeowners are divided regarding whether renters have a negative impact on neighborhoods.

As a Renter, Are You as Committed to Your Neighborhood, Community, and Home as You Would Be if You Owned It?

Asked of Renters



Agree or Disagree: Neighborhoods Are Hurt When People Who Rent Move In



NOTES:

- Darker colors=intensity
- Don't Know/Refused not shown

Methodology

- This survey was conducted by Widmeyer Communications, a Finn Partners Company.
- The survey was conducted with a nationally representative sample of 1,000 U.S. adults.
- It was conducted via telephone by professional interviewers using a random digit dial (RDD) sample.
- The survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.