



2026 OCCASIONS REPORT

Pet Ownership

The 2026 Occasions Survey suggests new-pet celebrations are becoming an even bigger part of American life.

This year, 14% of respondents said they were very likely and 22% somewhat likely to attend a friends-and-family new-pet event in the next 12 months, up from 11% very and 20% somewhat likely in last year's survey. The results suggest not only continued enthusiasm for pet ownership, but also a growing cultural tendency to celebrate new four-legged, finned and feathered family members with gifting to match.

For their own households, 12% of respondents said that they were very likely and 20% somewhat likely to host a pet-related celebration, compared with 12% and 15% in last year's poll. When gifting for pet occasions, 15% were very likely and 20% somewhat likely to purchase a home and housewares gift, up from 11% and 16%, respectively, in the 2025 survey.

Unsurprisingly, cleaning and home environment products led all categories for pet-focused gifting at 47% this year, followed by organization/home décor at 25% and bathroom/personal care at 23%. Last year, the same top three were nearly identical at 42%, 25% and 20%, respectively. Consumers remain somewhat uncertain about what to give for pet parties: 28% said they would likely give a gift card and 34% would choose a specific item, compared with 27% and 38% respectively, last year.

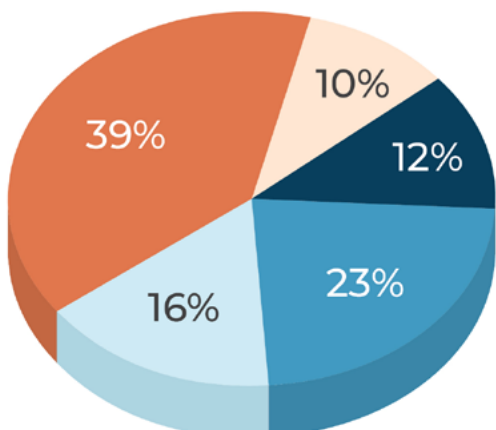
Millennials remain the demographic most likely to anticipate a pet ownership event of their own: 16% very likely and 28% somewhat likely in 2026, versus 16% and 18%, respectively, last year.

Gen Z followed at 19% very likely and 18% somewhat likely, up from 15% and 18%, respectively, in 2025.

For friends-and-family pet celebrations, Millennials (18% very likely, 29% somewhat likely) and Gen Z (19% very likely, 27% somewhat likely) are virtually tied.

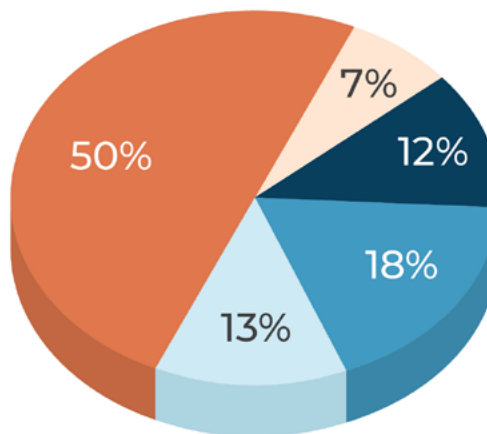


Likelihood of a New Pet Ownership Event Among Friends or Family in the Next 12 Months



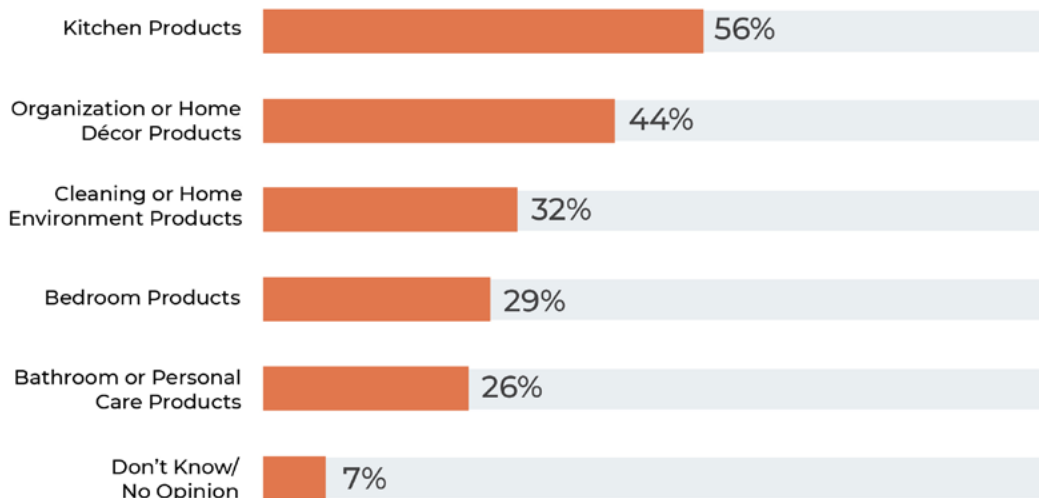
Very Likely Somewhat Likely Not too Likely
Not at all Likely Don't know/No Opinion

Likelihood of a New Pet Ownership Event for Oneself in the Next 12 Months



Very Likely Somewhat Likely Not too Likely
Not at all Likely Don't know/No Opinion

Home + Housewares Categories Likely To Be Purchased for a New Pet Ownership Event

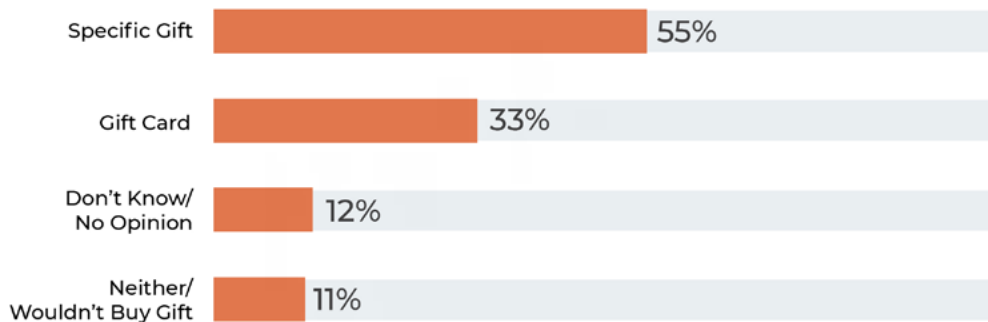


Urban consumers were most likely to anticipate pet events for 2026, at 18% very likely and 26% somewhat likely – up notably from 14% and 18%, respectively, in 2025.

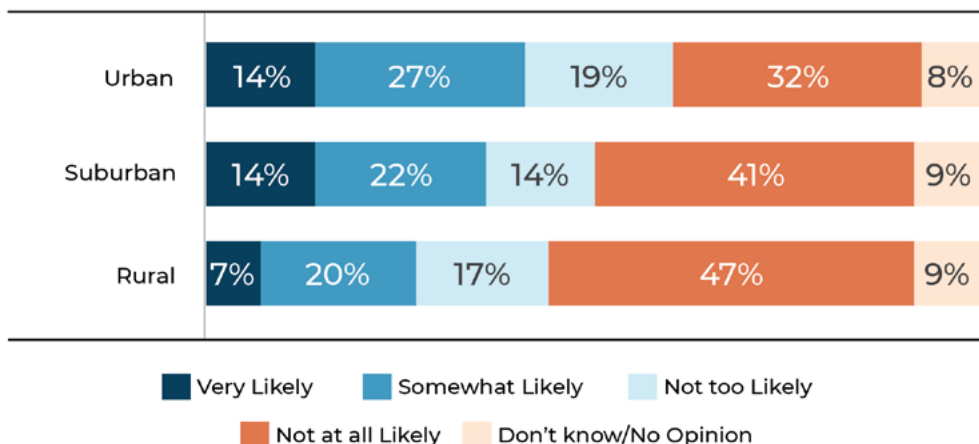
They surpassed both suburban respondents (10%/20% last year) and rural respondents (11%/22%).



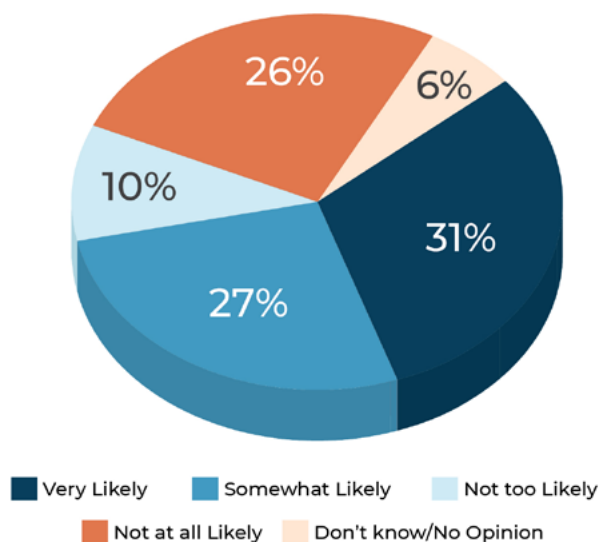
Preferred Types of New Pet Ownership Gifts



Likelihood of Attending a New Pet Ownership Event by Generation



Likelihood of Purchasing a Home + Housewares Gift for a New Pet Ownership Event



Post-graduates show the most significant increase in anticipation of attending pet-related events: 21% very likely and 22% somewhat likely, up from 13% and 20%, respectively, last year. Bachelor's degree holders followed at 11% very and 25% somewhat likely, versus 13% and 23%, respectively, last year.



FINAL THOUGHTS

Americans continue to spend heavily on pets, making it unsurprising that they're also willing to spend on celebrations welcoming new animal companions. According to the American Pet Products Association, U.S. pet expenditures are projected to reach \$157 billion in 2025, up from \$151.9 billion in 2024. Pre-pandemic, in 2019, before pet acquisition increased, that figure was just \$97.1 billion. Although growth has moderated in the past two years, spending continues to rise.

Dogs remain the nation's most common companions, present in 68 million households, followed by 49 million with cats and 10 million with freshwater fish. Millennials lead all generations in pet ownership at 30%, followed by Gen X at 25%, Baby Boomers at 25% and Gen Z at 20%, a share that will naturally rise as Gen Z continues to establish independent households.

As pet celebrations become more commonplace and consumer spending on companion animals continues its long-term rise, opportunities for home and housewares gifting tailored to pet owners appear poised for continued growth.

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