

Bathrooms over countertops. How Covid-19 has changed home listings.



Move over countertops. The pandemic has changed the game when it comes to the top selling points in home sales listings.

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By [Andy Medici](#) — Senior Reporter, The Business Journals,
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Move over granite countertops — Covid-19 changed the top selling points in home listings.

In 2019, the most popular home features and amenities in home listings were granite countertops, hardwood floors and stainless steel appliances. But now, after 18 months of a global pandemic, the top amenities listed in homes for sale were garages, walk-in closets and full bathrooms, reflecting the changing desires of potential buyers.

[The findings come from Point2homes.com](#), a Yardi Matrix company, which analyzed 43 million words from across all listings in the United States that were active in April 2021 and ranked the keywords according to the number of times they appeared in home descriptions. The company then compared that to its 2019 analysis before the pandemic.

The focus on spaces as opposed to features makes sense following a lengthy period during which people spent a lot more time inside, [said blog author Andra Hopulele](#).

“At home, the bathroom transcended its primary function, becoming the only truly private room in a perpetually full home. And, in order to venture outside, the car became indispensable. So, naturally, a garage or a parking space became equally vital,” she wrote.

The home office came in at No. 44 of the top 100 most used features and amenities in home listings. In 2019, it did not appear in the top 100. Other phrases to describe extra spaces in home listings surged in prominence since the pandemic, including the term “bonus room,” which came in at No. 17 in 2021 but didn't make the 2019 list.

“Even when breaking down the most-used keywords by living area, one aspect that stood out was the increase in keywords that promised that extra bit of living space. Mentions of closed-off areas and separate rooms — such as ‘bonus room,’ ‘laundry room’ and ‘home office’ — surged. Similarly, one telling

development was that 'fireplace' — a highly soothing, relaxing home feature — occupied one of the top spots. This could suggest that many families were trying to turn their living rooms into oases of calm away from the world," [Hopulele](#) wrote.

Top 100 Most Used Features & Amenities

Rank	Houses	Condos
1	garage	parking
2	walk-in closet	garage
3	full bath	hardwood floors
4	open floor plan	walk-in closet
5	hardwood floors	washer/dryer
6	granite countertops	stainless-steel appliances
7	stainless-steel appliances	granite countertops
8	laundry room	full bath
9	additional bedrooms	open floor plan
10	fenced backyard	shopping/restaurants
11	double vanity	fitness center
12	covered patio	laundry room
13	formal dining room	within walking distance
14	parking	natural light
15	natural light	large/spacious bedrooms

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Top 10 Most Used Keywords by Home Area



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The changes come as the [housing market may be hitting a turning point](#), according to various metrics. While the median price for actively listed houses jumped 12.7% in June 2021 over the same time in 2020, to \$385,000, there is also data showing that more homes have sold and inventory has increased.

Recent data from Seattle-based Redfin Corp. also [found the number of homes newly listed for sale surpassed](#) 2019 levels during the four weeks ended July 4. That's the first time in 2021 that's happened. Homebuying demand has also recently — somewhat — tapered off, according to pending sales data, Redfin's Homebuyer Demand Index and Mortgage Bankers Association's survey of number of mortgage applications.

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But the red hot housing market, even if it's cooling, has meant homes in general have only [gotten less affordable over the last several months](#), according to data from national property database ATTOM.

Single-family homes and condos were less affordable than historical averages in 61% of counties across the country during the second quarter of 2021, up from 48% of counties across the country during the same quarter in 2020, according to the study.