

# 2017

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## U.S. HOUZZ LANDSCAPE TRENDS STUDY



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# Big Ideas

## FRONT YARDS MAKE A STATEMENT

Homeowners are making significant changes to their front yards, creating landscapes that are distinctly different from neighboring properties. Two in five say their new front yards are very or extremely different from others in the neighborhood post-update (41%).

## CULTIVATING CURB APPEAL

More than half of those updating their front yards say that beds or borders (47%), shrubs (29%), and perennials (28%) are the most important features of their home's curb appeal.

## NEW HOME, NEW YARD

The share of outdoor projects motivated by a recent home purchase increased in 2017 (33% vs. 25% in the 2016 study). At the same time, the share of projects triggered by something breaking down and/or finally having time or money for the project declined.

## LIGHTING GOES SMART

Nearly half of outdoor-renovating homeowners are updating lighting (45%), with most choosing LEDs (73%). Remarkably, one in five homeowners is choosing "smart" lighting that can be controlled via a mobile device or computer.

# At a Glance: Landscape Renovation

	Top Outdoor Project Features		
<b>Scope of outdoor project</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Complete overhaul 37%	Major renovation 48%	Minor updates 15%
<b>Top pro types hired</b> (among renovating homeowners who completed their outdoor project)	Landscape contractor 34%	Landscape architect or designer 34%	Stone, pavers, and/or concrete specialist 32%
<b>Top upgraded outdoor structures</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Patio/terrace 39%	Arbor, gazebo, pergola, or trellis 26%	Deck 20%
<b>Top upgraded outdoor non-structural features</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Beds/borders 73%	Pathways 42%	Planters/planter boxes 40%
<b>Top upgraded outdoor systems</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Lighting 45%	Sprinklers/irrigation 37%	Composting 23%
<b>Top hard surface materials</b> (among those upgrading pathways, driveways, patios, and terraces)	Pavers 54%	Mulch 44%	Gravel/crushed or decomposed rock 38%
<b>Top lawn alternatives</b> (among those reducing or removing their existing lawn)	Hardscape (pavers, stones, etc.) 66%	Garden beds 60%	Other ground cover plants/ornamental grasses 55%

# At a Glance: Landscape Design and Function

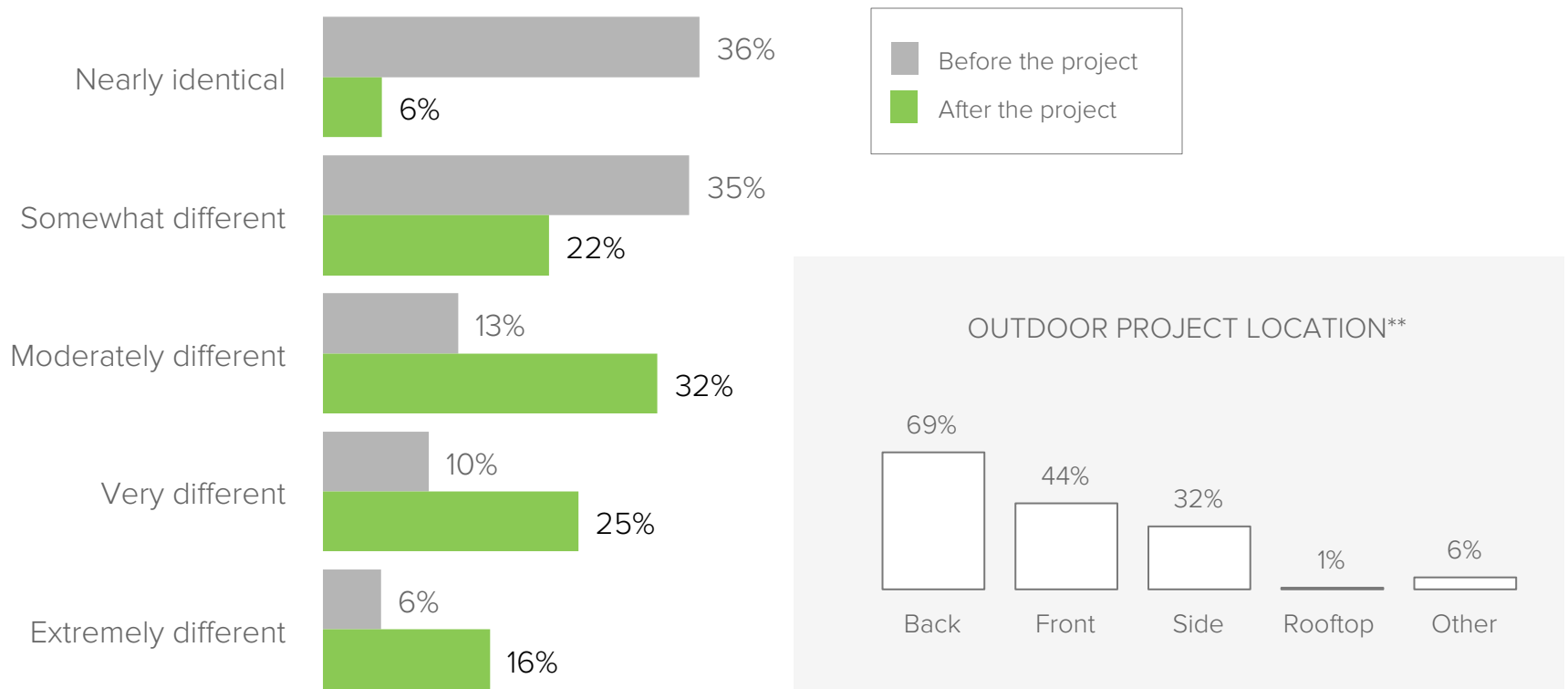
	Top Outdoor Project Features		
<b>Top project challenges</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Drainage 31%	Poor use of space 31%	Lack of privacy 24%
<b>Top project triggers</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Purchased my home recently and want to make it my own 33%	Elements of the outdoor space deteriorated/broke down 32%	Wanted to do it all along and finally have the time to do it 28%
<b>Average length of major projects</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Planning length 5 months	Implementation length 4 months	Implementation start months March-June (47%)
<b>Top outdoor purchases</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Outdoor lounge furniture 36%	Fire pit 32%	Outdoor dining furniture 28%
<b>Top curb appeal</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Beds/borders 47%	Shrubs 29%	Perennials (e.g., flowering, edible) 28%
<b>Top new-plant characteristics</b> (among renovating homeowners)	Low maintenance 76%	Flowering 69%	Butterfly, bee, or hummingbird attractant 52%
<b>Top new-lighting features</b> (among those upgrading lighting)	LED 73%	Solar 41%	Smart 19%

# Neighborhood and Curb Appeal

# Front Yards Make a Statement

Nearly half of outdoor projects involve street-facing spaces (44%). Only 6% of front yards are nearly identical to others in the neighborhood after outdoor projects, compared with over a third before the update (36%). Two in five front yards are very or extremely different from others in the neighborhood post-update (41%).

## COMPARISON OF FRONT YARDS TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S IN COMPLETED OUTDOOR PROJECTS\*



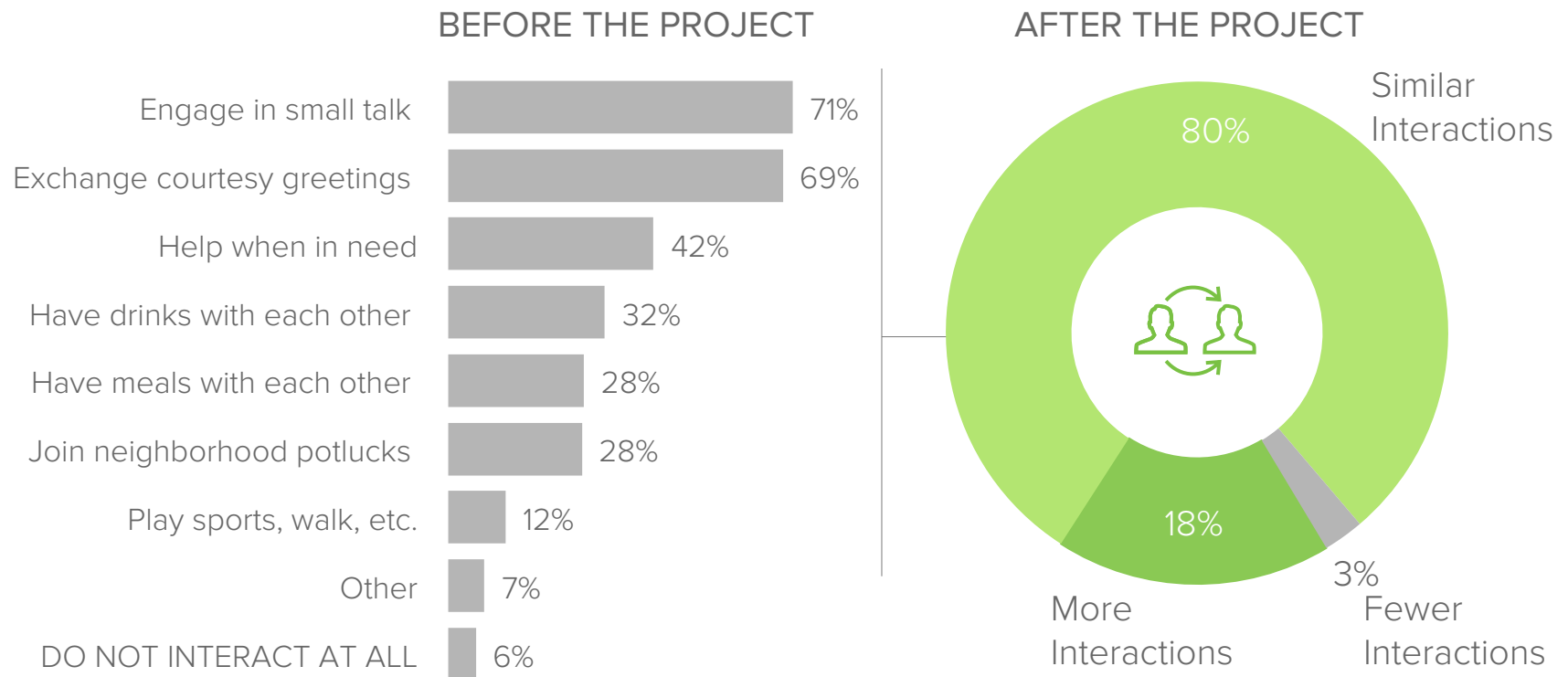
\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed an outdoor project in *the front of the home* during 2016-17.

\*\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# Neighborly Small Talk

One in five homeowners reports more interaction with next-door neighbors post-project (18%). Still, an outdoor project has the potential to lead to fewer interactions (3%).

## HOMEOWNER INTERACTIONS WITH NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBORS (AMONG 94% WHO HAVE A NEIGHBOR)\*



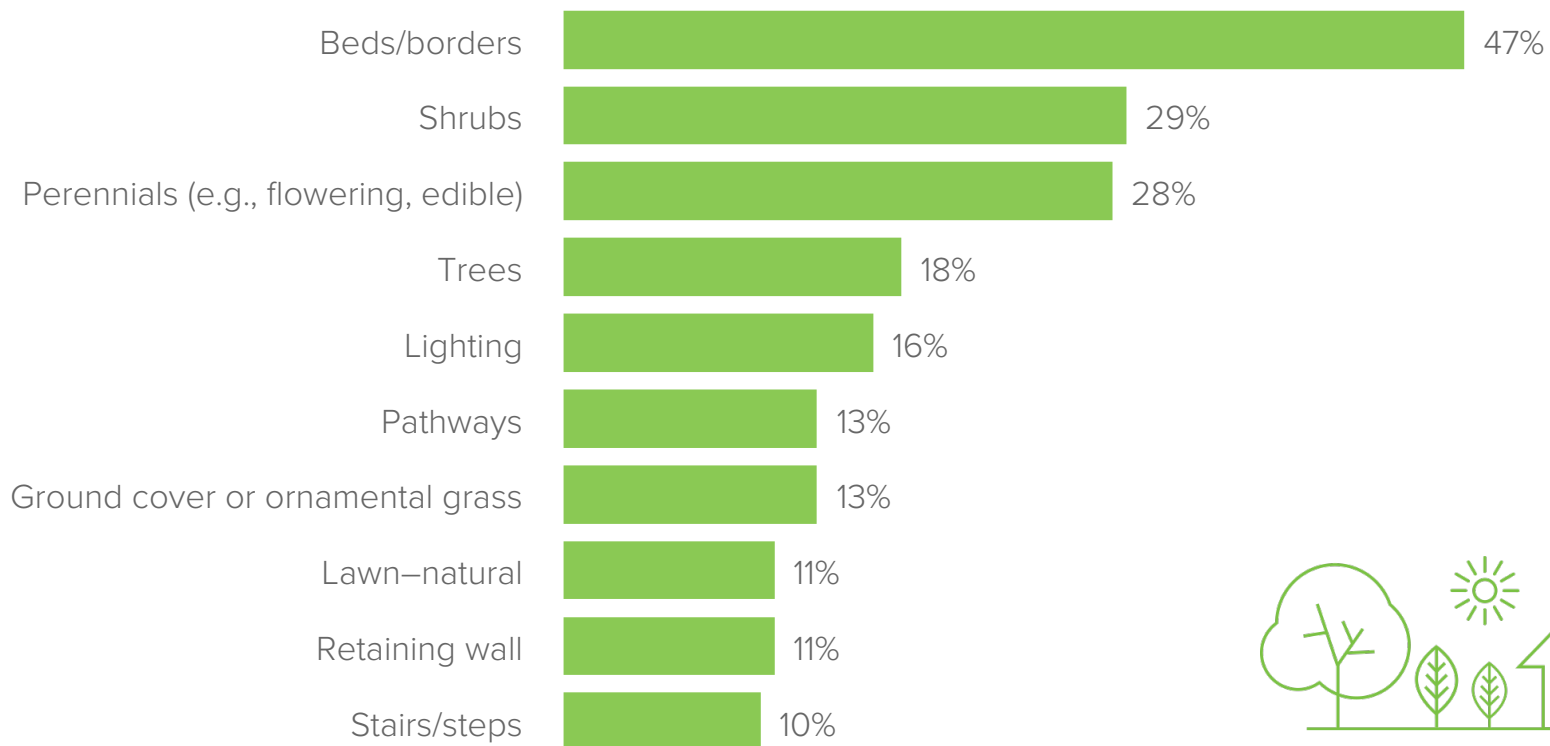
\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who *have neighbors* and completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.



# Cultivating Curb Appeal

Homeowners updating their front yards are looking to new landscaping features, including beds, shrubs, and perennials, to boost their home's curb appeal. Other top features include lighting and pathways.

## MOST IMPORTANT FRONT YARD UPDATES FOR HOME'S CURB APPEAL\*

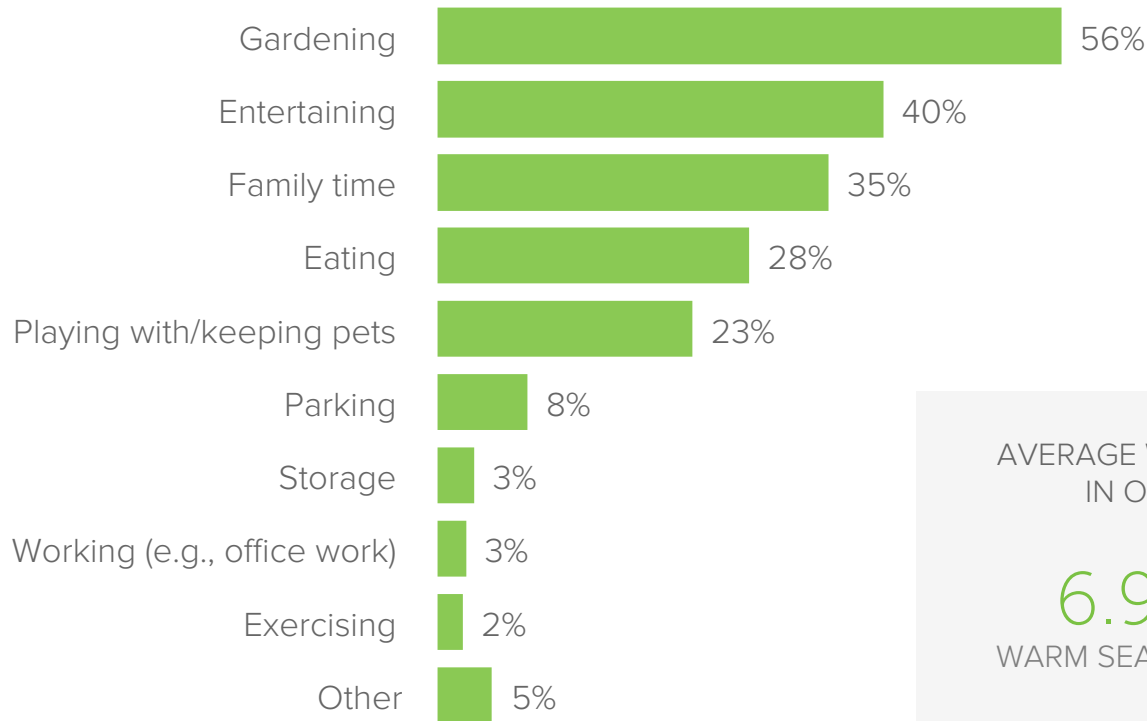


\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who are updating the front of the home as part of their completed, current, or planned outdoor project during 2016-17.

# Creating a Private Retreat

Two-thirds of homeowners use their outdoor spaces for relaxing (69%), from gardening to entertaining to spending time with their family. Naturally, the amount of time spent outside varies significantly between warm and cold seasons (seven vs. two hours on average per week, respectively).

## OUTDOOR USAGE\*



AVERAGE WEEKLY HOURS SPENT  
IN OUTDOOR SPACE\*

6.9

WARM SEASON

2.4

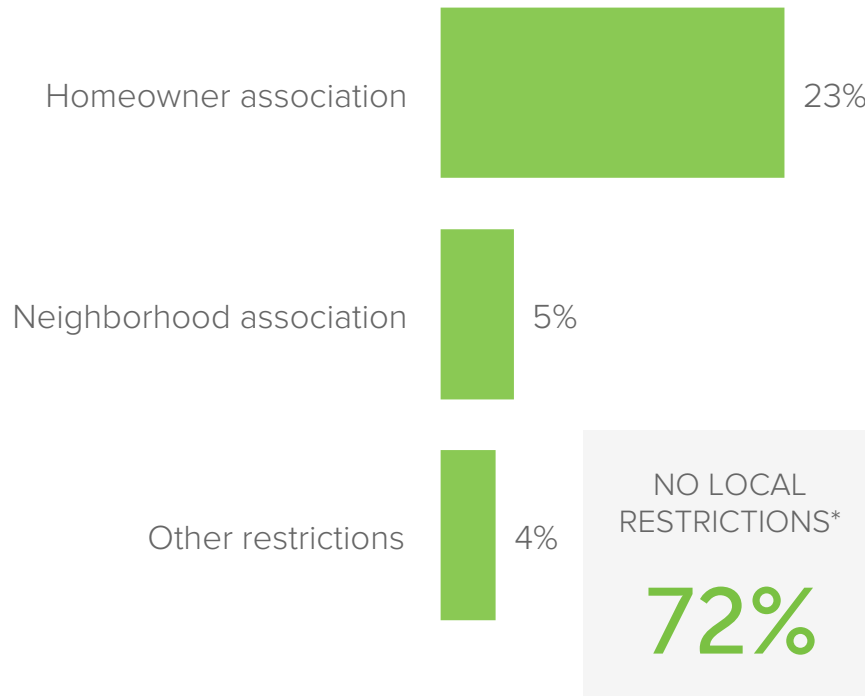
COLD SEASON

\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.

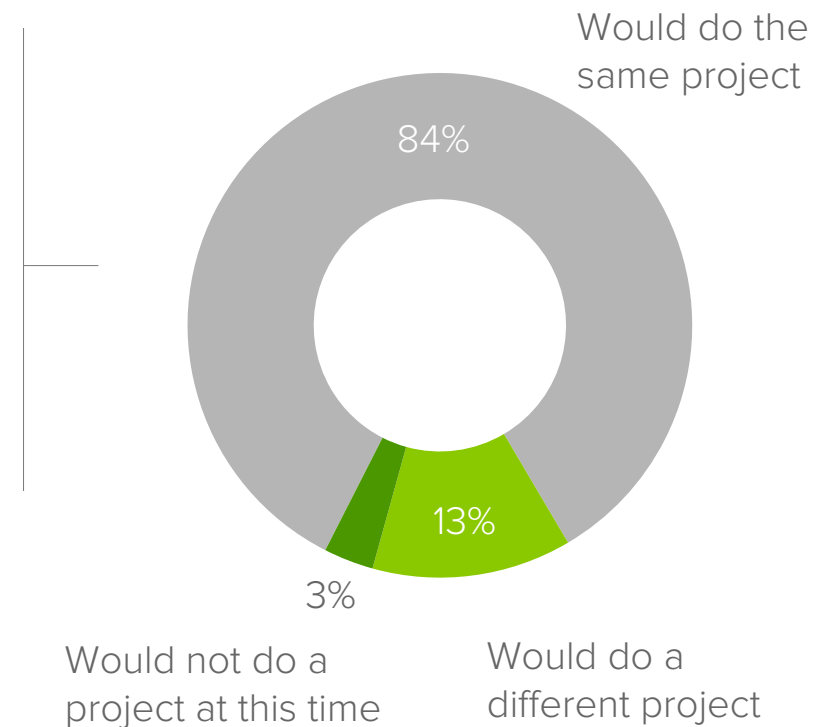
# Love-Hate HOA Relationship

One in four outdoor projects is subject to local restrictions or requirements, such as homeowner and/or neighborhood associations (23% and 5%, respectively). In the absence of those rules, nearly one in four homeowners would either take on a different project or skip the project altogether (13% and 3%, respectively).

LOCAL RESTRICTIONS AFFECTING OUTDOOR PROJECT\*



PROJECT LIKELIHOOD IN ABSENCE OF RESTRICTIONS\*\*



\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.

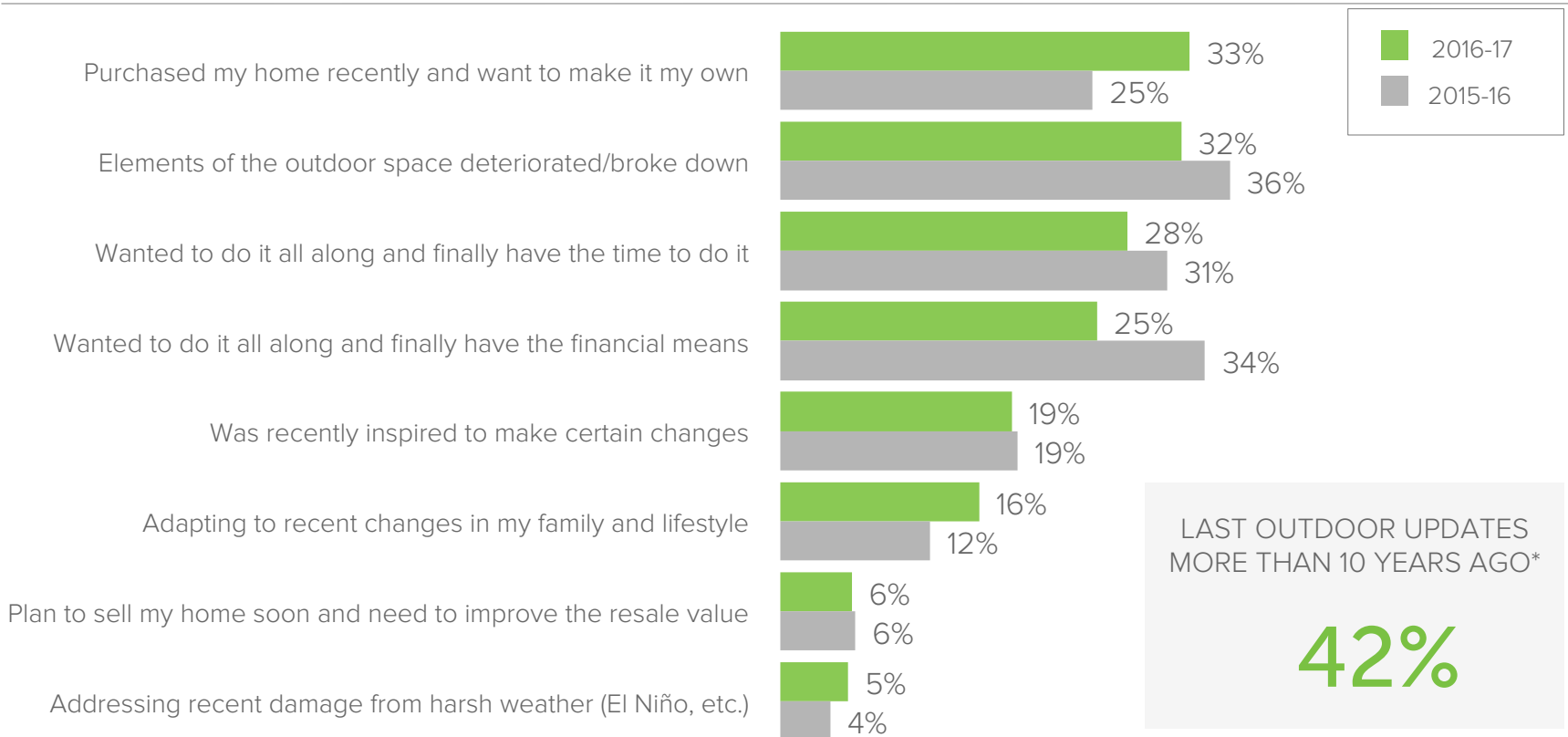
\*\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who are affected by HOA or neighborhood rules and have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17

# Triggers and Scope

# New Home, New Yard

Having purchased a home and wanting to personalize it tops the list of landscaping motivations for the first time (33%). While the share of projects triggered by something breaking down slightly declined since the 2016 study, it is still high (32%) and in line with many homeowners reporting their last outdoor updates happened more than 10 years ago (42%).

## TOP EVENTS TRIGGERING OUTDOOR PROJECTS\*

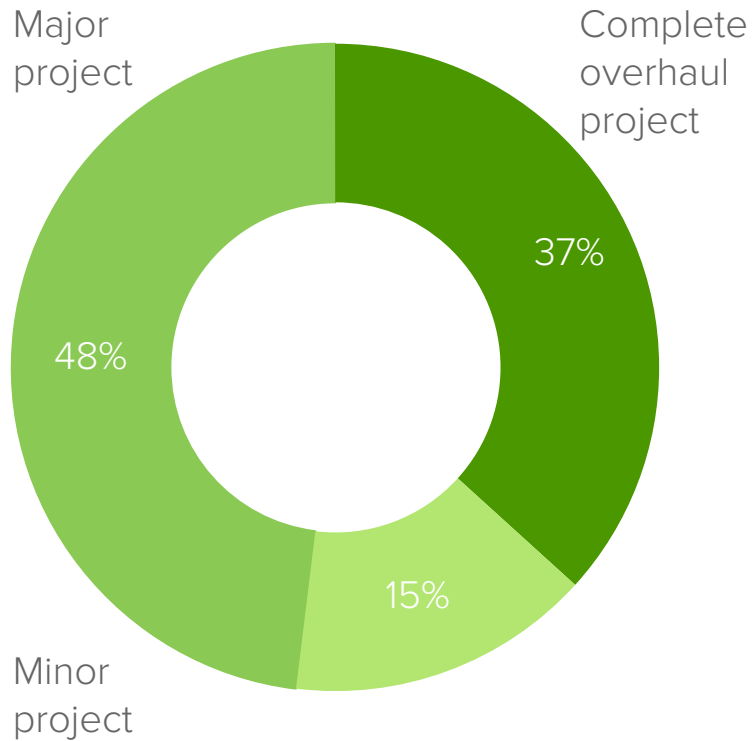


\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17 and 2015-16.

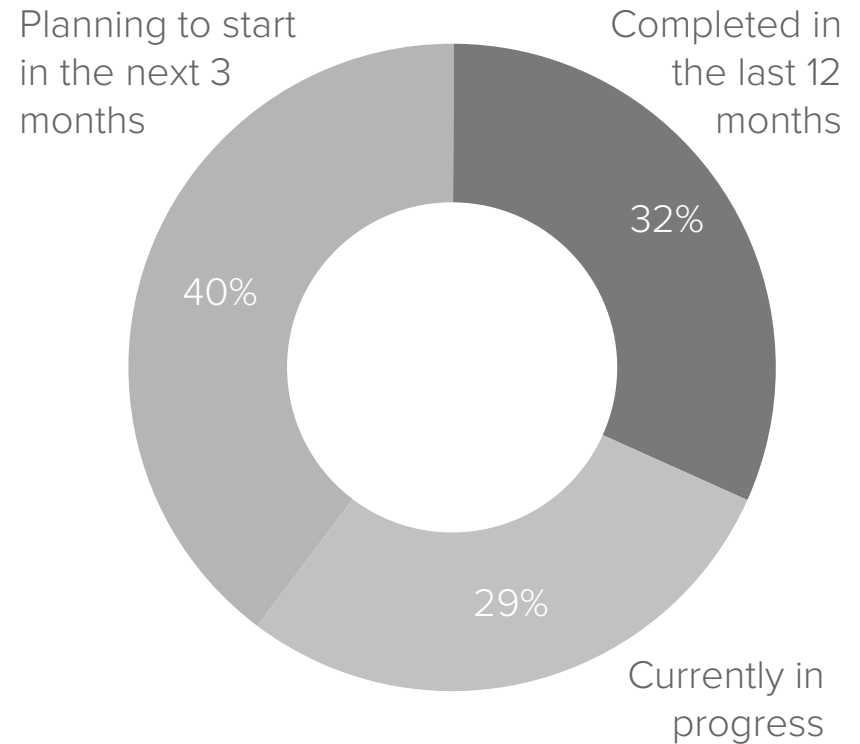
# A Full Range of Options

Homeowners on Houzz go big on landscaping projects, with nearly nine in 10 reporting major renovations or complete overhauls (48% and 37%, respectively). The timing of projects is split nearly evenly across completed, currently in progress, and still in planning phase.

SCOPE OF OUTDOOR PROJECTS\*



TIMING OF OUTDOOR PROJECTS\*

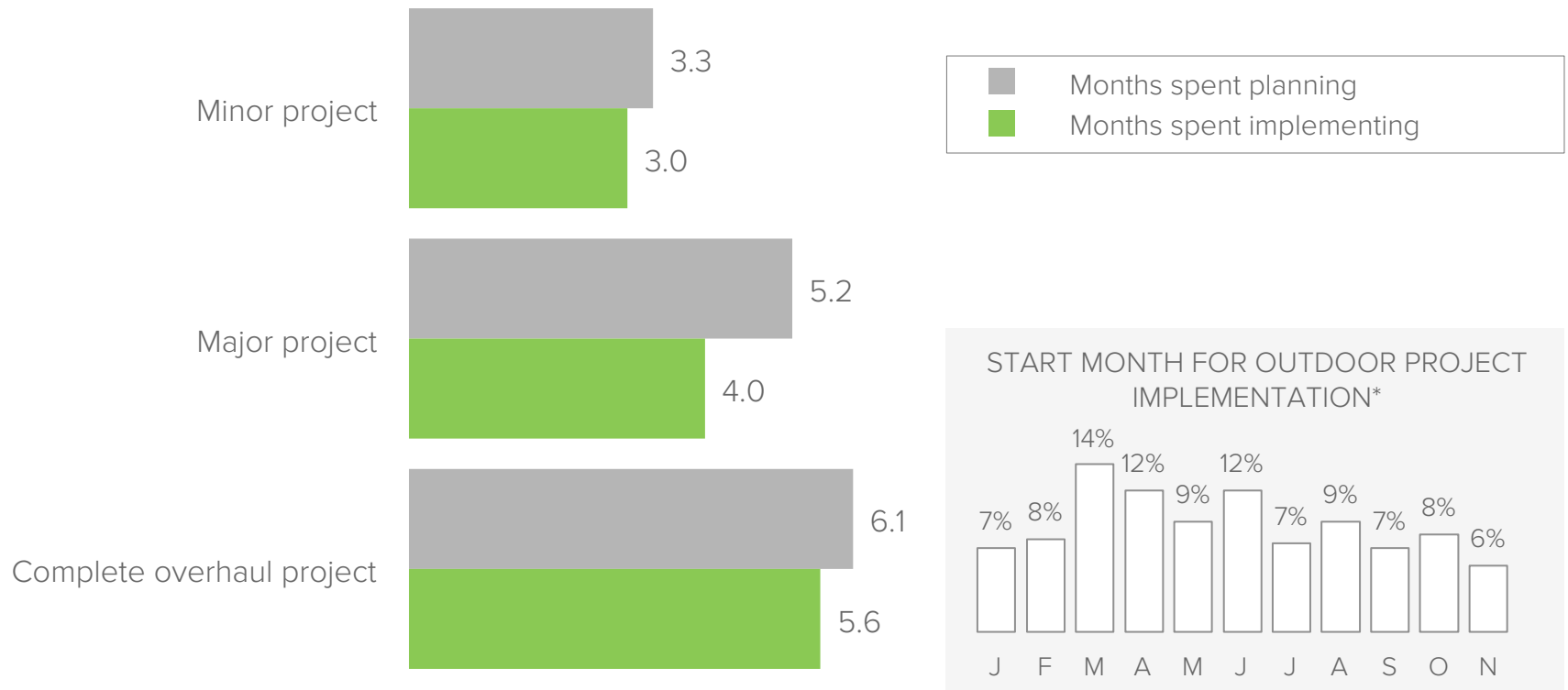


\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# Months of Planning

The planning and execution of outdoor projects vary significantly by project scope. On average, planning takes 3-6 months, while implementation runs 3-5.5 months. March, April, May and June are the most common months to start a project (47%), while November and December are least common (6%).

AVERAGE NUMBER OF MONTHS OF OUTDOOR PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING – BY PROJECT SCOPE\*

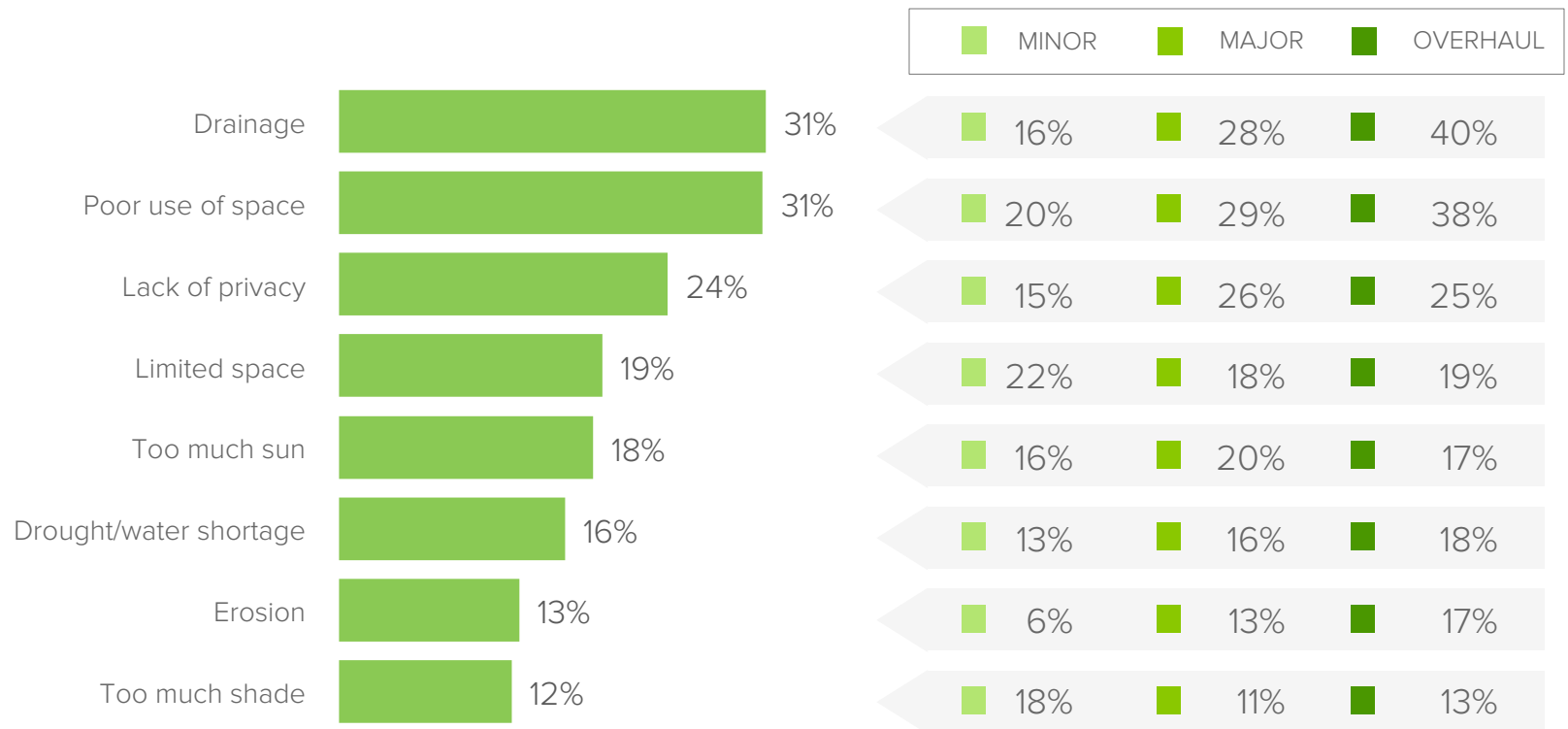


\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# Drain and Optimize

Drainage and poor use of space are the two most common challenges addressed during outdoor projects, especially among homeowners completely redoing their outdoor spaces (40% and 38%, respectively). The top three challenges in minor projects relate to limited, poorly used, and/or shaded spaces (22%, 20%, and 18%, respectively).

## TOP CHALLENGES ADDRESSED IN OUTDOOR PROJECTS – OVERALL AND BY PROJECT SCOPE\*



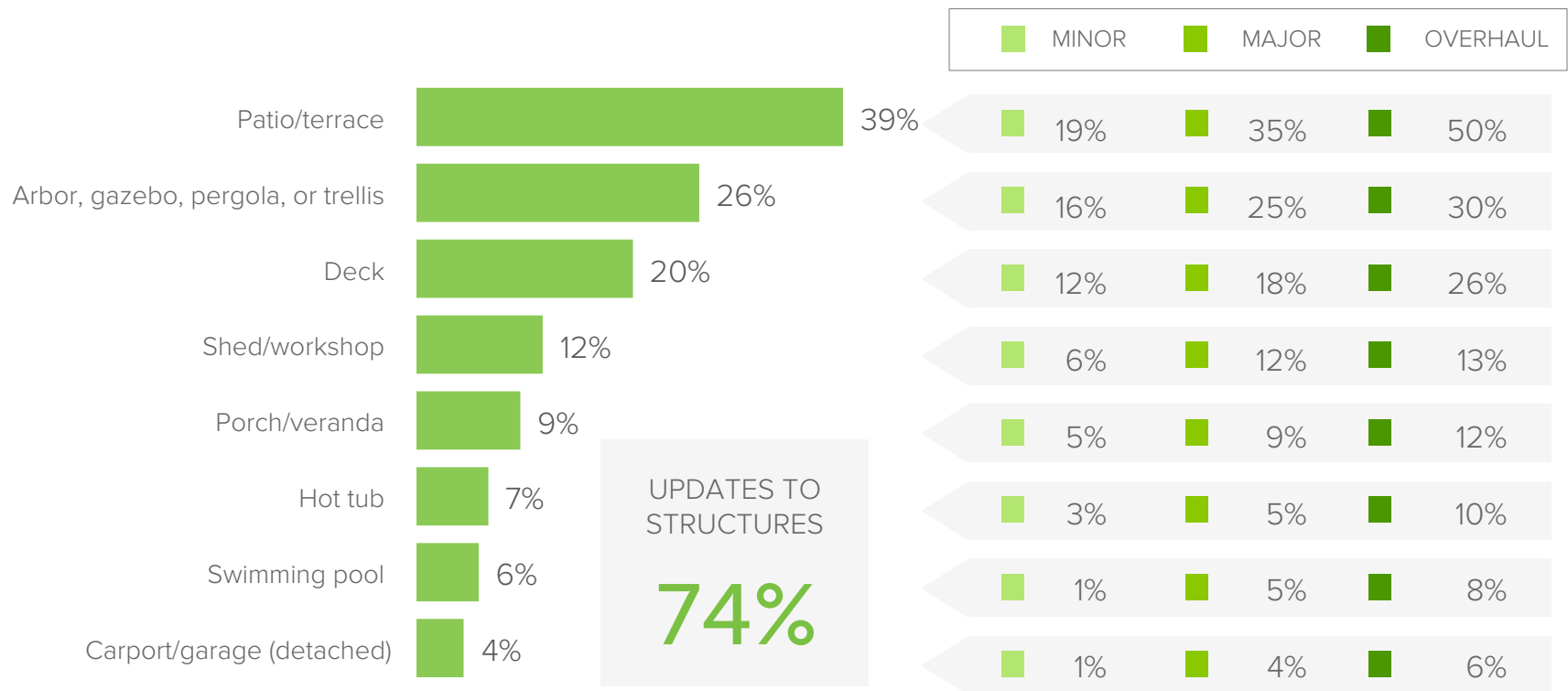
\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.



# Over and Under Structures

Many outdoor projects include work on outdoor structures. Two in five upgrades tackle patios or terraces (39%), especially popular during complete outdoor overhauls (52%). Overhead structures such as arbors or gazebos (26%), as well as decks (20%), are the next favorite, even among minor projects.

## TOP UPDATED OUTDOOR STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS – OVERALL AND BY PROJECT SCOPE\*

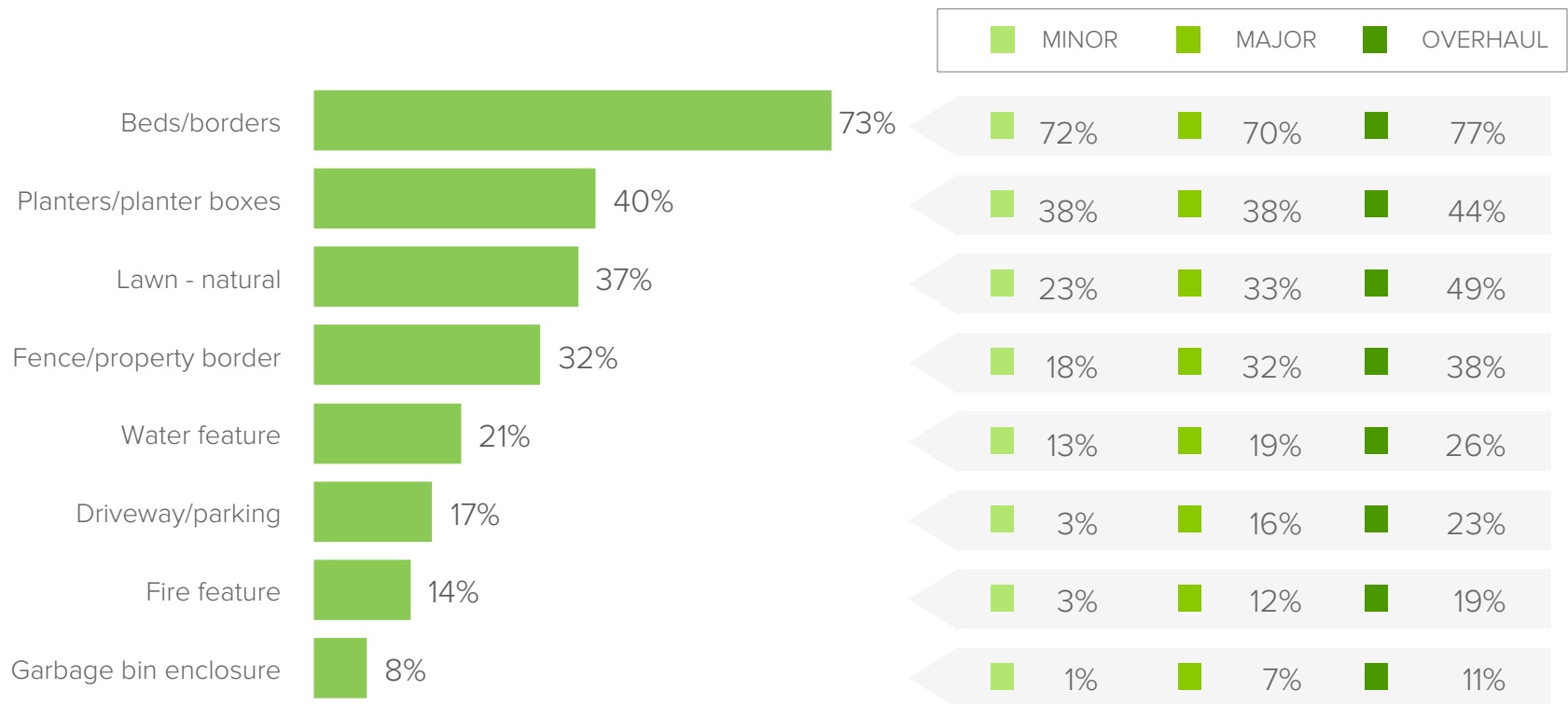


\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# Lawn, Water, and Fire

Whether the outdoor project is small or large, many homeowners are making updates to the lawn. Other standout features include water-and fire-related elements, with a fifth or more of those doing complete overhaul projects installing these elements in the yard (26% and 19%, respectively).

## TOP UPDATED OUTDOOR NON-STRUCTURAL FEATURES – OVERALL AND BY PROJECT SCOPE\*

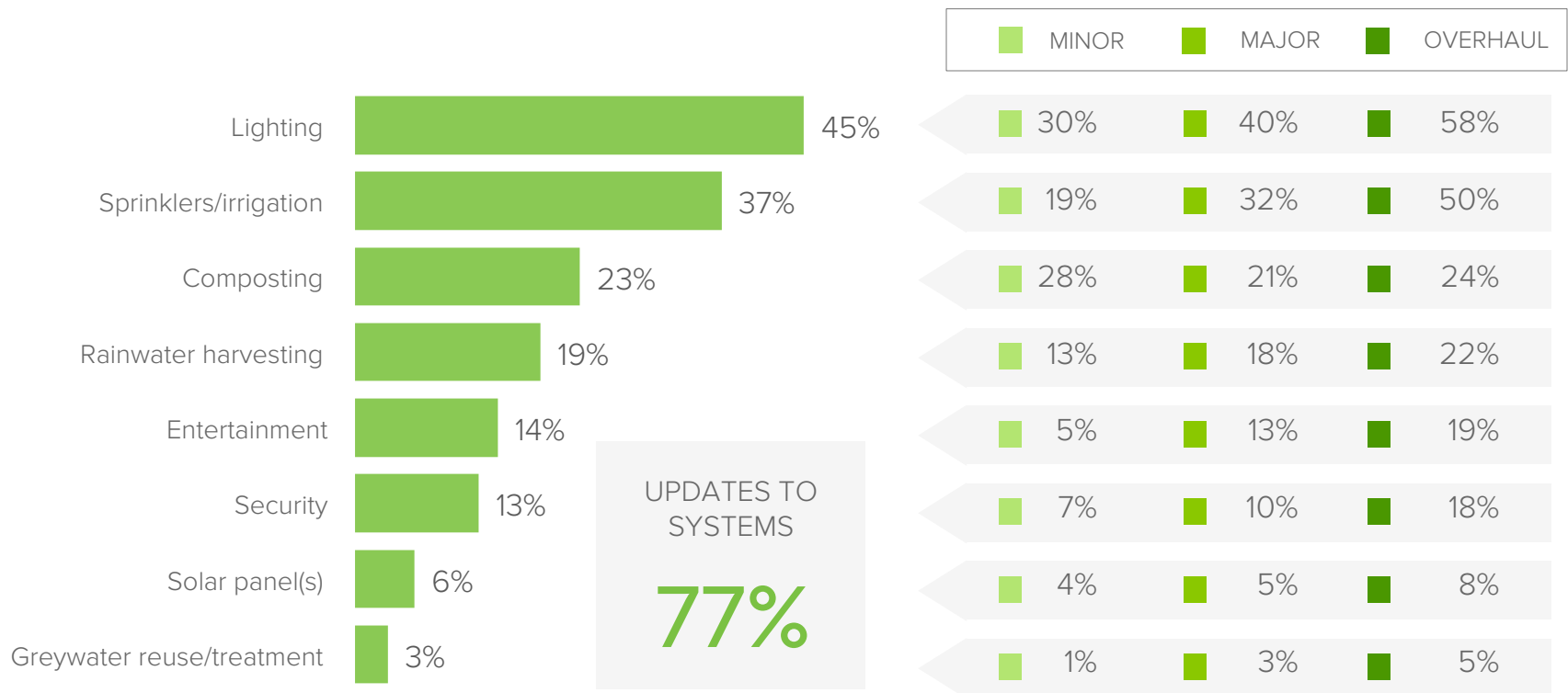


\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# Lighting Up the Outdoors

Over three-quarters of outdoor renovators are making updates to outdoor systems. Outdoor lighting and irrigation systems are the most popular upgrades (45% and 37%, respectively), especially in complete overhaul projects (58% and 50%, respectively).

## TOP UPDATED OUTDOOR SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT – OVERALL AND BY PROJECT SCOPE\*

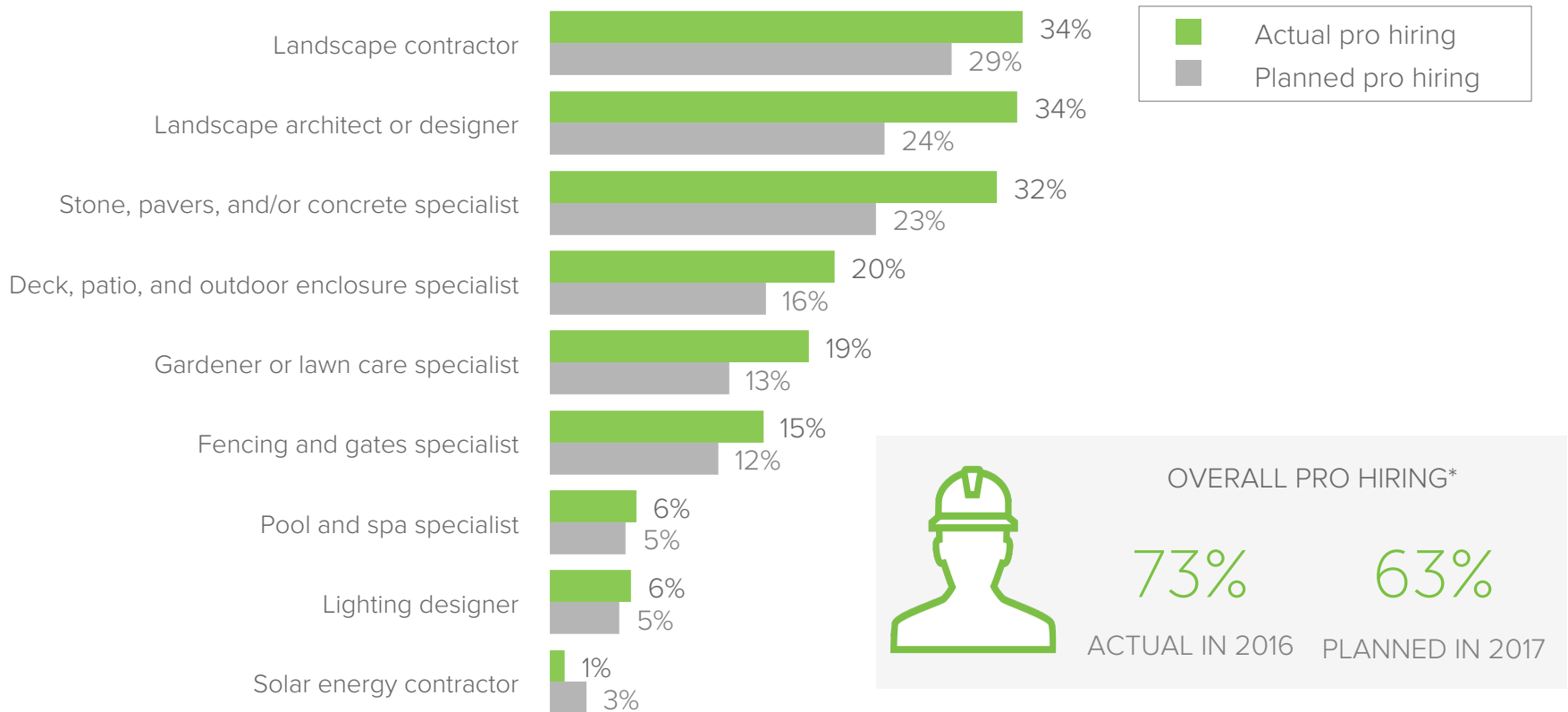


\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# In Need of Help

A whopping 73% of homeowners actually hired a pro for an outdoor project completed in 2016. Yet, only 63% plan to hire a pro for an upcoming project, likely due to homeowners realizing that they are in need of greater help than initially expected. Landscape architects and stone specialists are most subject to last-minute hiring.

## TOP HIRED PROFESSIONALS IN OUTDOOR PROJECTS – BY ACTUAL VS. PLANNED HIRING\*

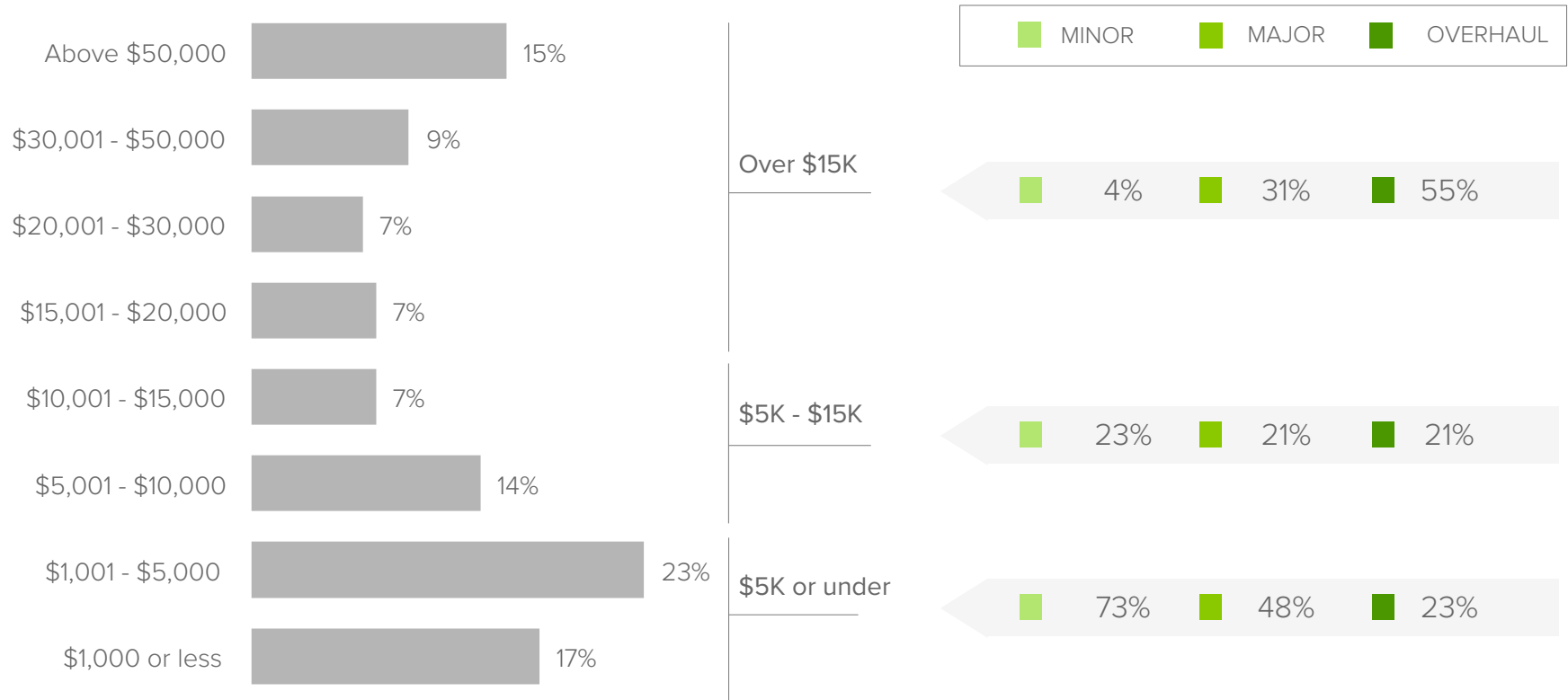


\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# \$15K Minimum for Complete Makeover

Outdoor projects come with all budgets. The majority of minor outdoor projects cost \$5,000 or less (73%), compared to only half of major projects (48%) and a quarter of overhaul projects (23%). In fact, over half of homeowners who give their outdoor spaces a complete overhaul spend more than \$15K on the project (55%).

## SPEND ON COMPLETED OUTDOOR PROJECTS – OVERALL AND BY PROJECT SCOPE\*



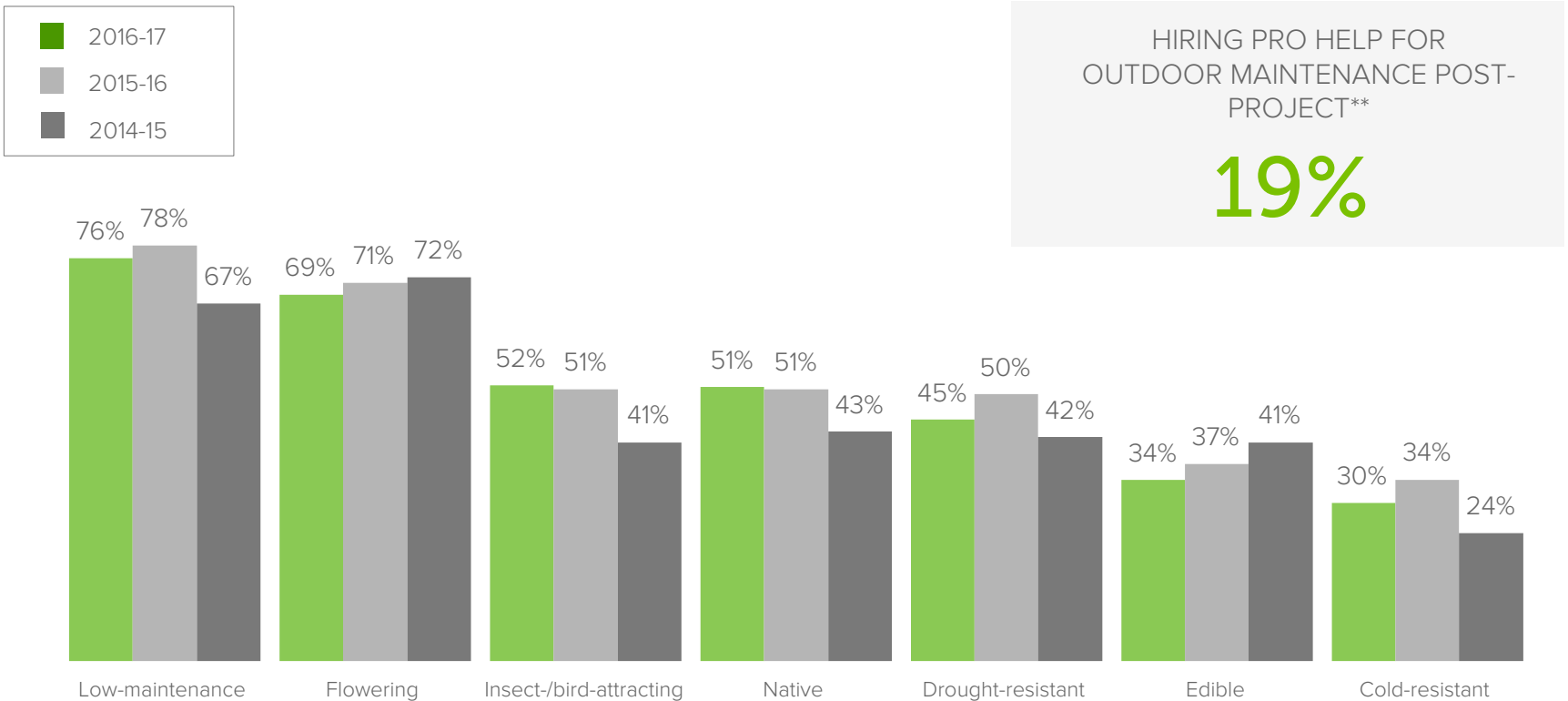
\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# Products, Materials, and Finishes

# Loving Low Maintenance

Just one in five of outdoor renovators plans to hire help to maintain outdoor spaces. It is no wonder then that among the 95% of homeowners who are updating with new plants, three-quarters are gravitating toward low-maintenance plants (76%). This may also explain the trend toward native and insect-/bird-attracting plants and the trend away from edibles.

## TOP NEW PLANT CHARACTERISTICS IN OUTDOOR PROJECTS - BY PROJECT YEAR\*



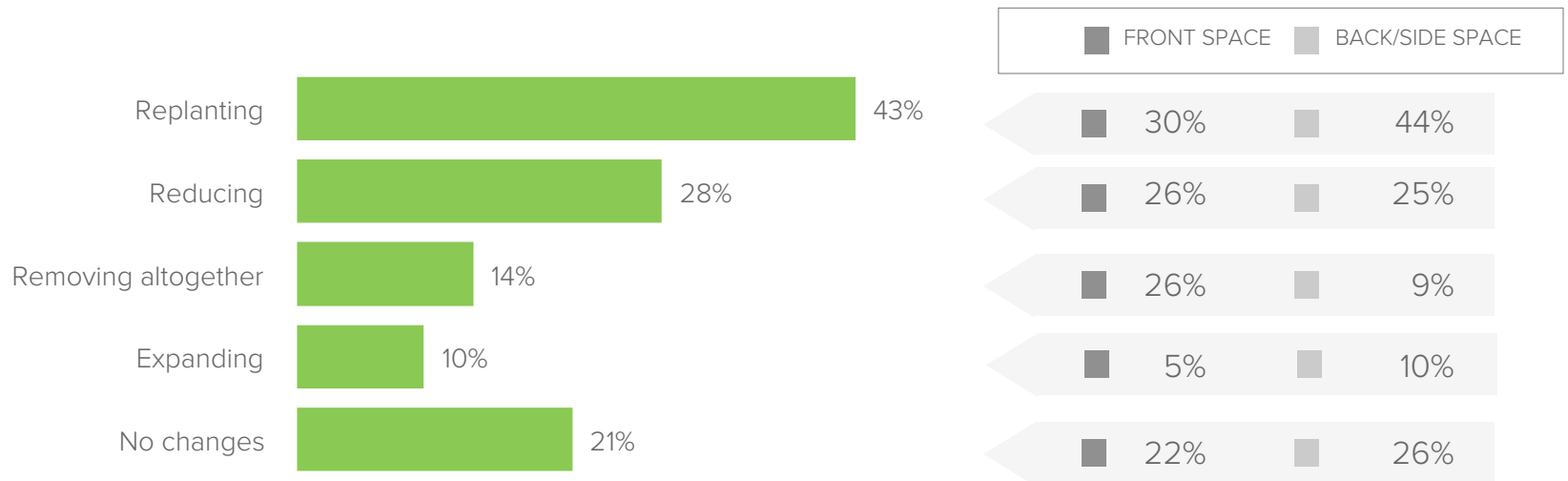
\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who are planting greenery other than lawn as part of their completed, current, or planned outdoor projects in 2016-17, 2015-16, 2014-15.

\*\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# Out With the Front Lawn

Among the 75% of outdoor-renovating homeowners who have an existing lawn, 76% are making changes to it during their outdoor project. Back or side lawns are more likely to be replanted or expanded, while front lawns are much more likely to be removed altogether, with environmental concerns being a strong motivator.

## EXISTING LAWN UPDATES IN OUTDOOR PROJECTS - OVERALL AND BY PROJECT LOCATION\*



“HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT” AS A MOTIVATION FOR REDUCING/REMOVING THE LAWN\*\*

40%  
OVERALL

44%  
FRONT LAWN

29%  
BACK/SIDE LAWN

\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners *with an existing lawn* who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project in 2016-17.

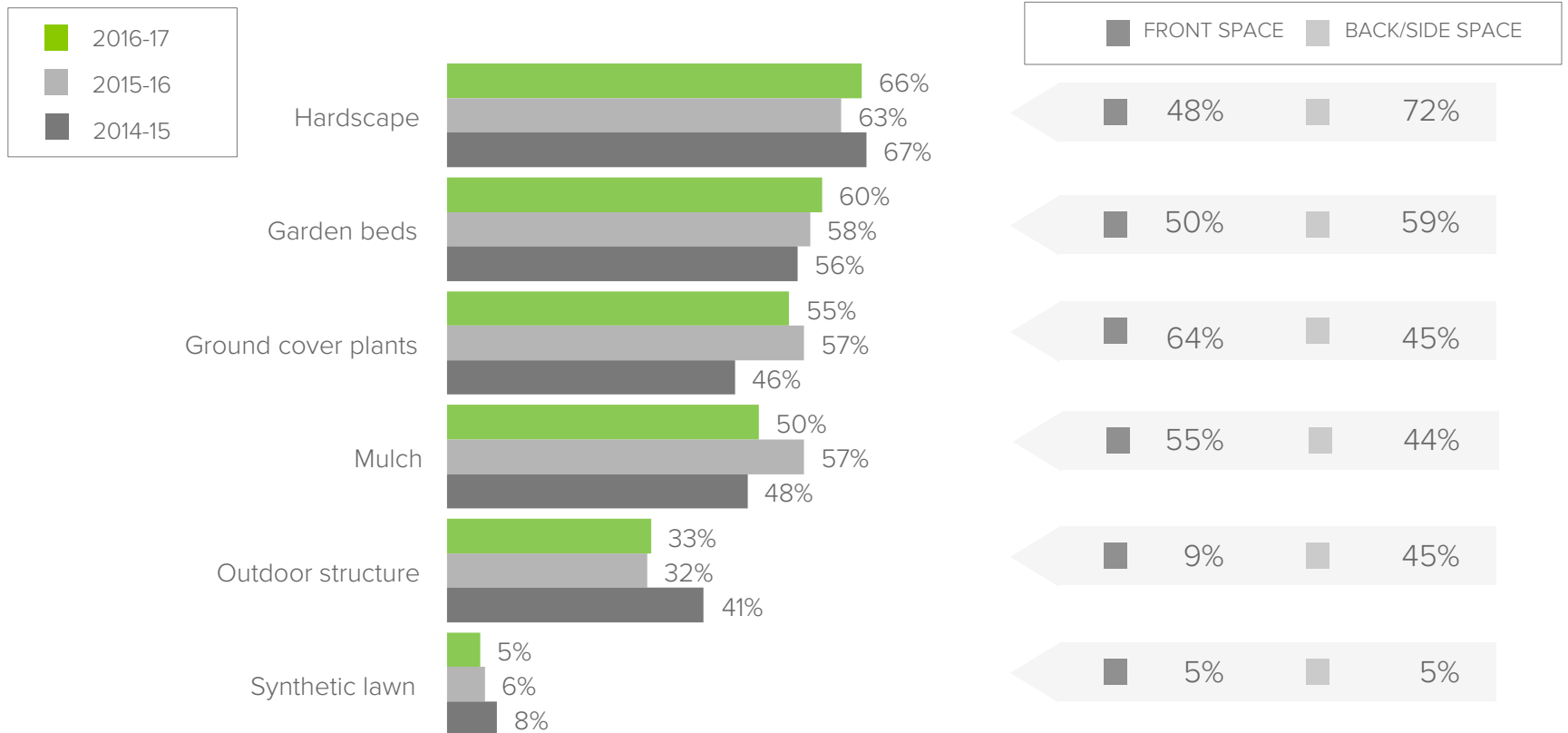
\*\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners *who are reducing or removing their existing lawns* as part of completed, current, or planned outdoor projects in 2016-17.



# Synthetics Stagnate

Among those reducing or removing their existing lawns, hardscapes and garden beds are the preferred replacement for back/side yards, while ground cover plants and mulch are favored for front yards. Synthetic lawns are decreasing in popularity as a replacement for natural lawns (5% in 2016-17 versus 8% in 2014-15).

PRODUCTS IN PLACE OF REDUCED OR REMOVED LAWN - OVERALL AND BY PROJECT LOCATION/YEAR\*

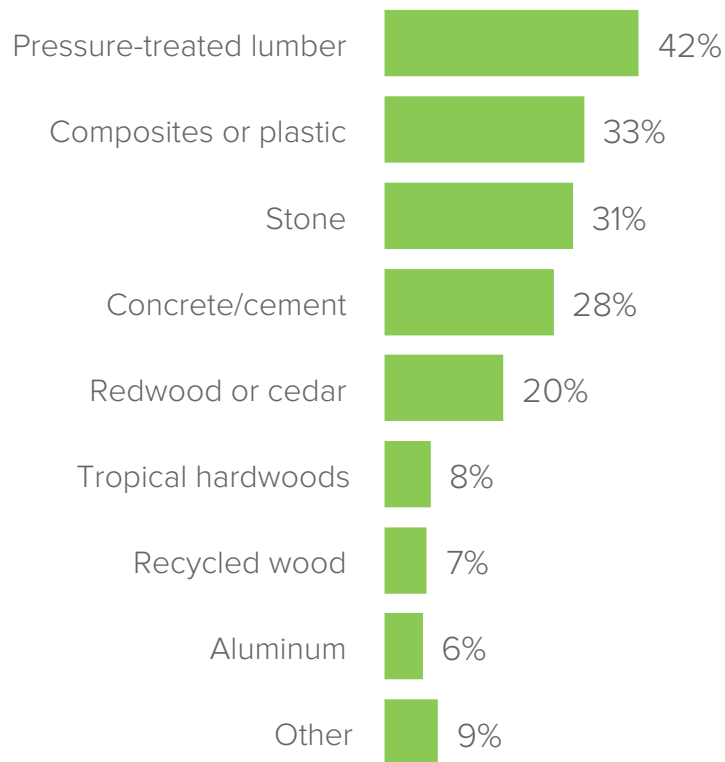


\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who are reducing or removing their existing lawns as part of completed, current, or planned outdoor projects in 2016-17, 2015-16, and 2014-15.

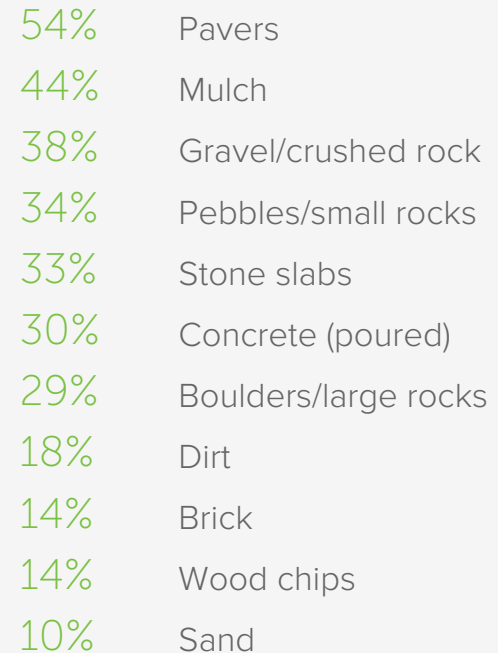
# Diverse Surfaces

Pressure-treated lumber remains the top choice for decking materials (42%), although composites, stone, concrete and redwood or cedar is popular alone or in a combination. Permeable materials such as pavers, mulch, and crushed rock are popular for other hard surfaces, such as paths or patios.

## MATERIALS INSTALLED IN UPGRADED/NEW DECKS\*



## NEW MATERIALS IN PATHWAYS, DRIVEWAYS, PATIOS, AND TERRACES\*\*



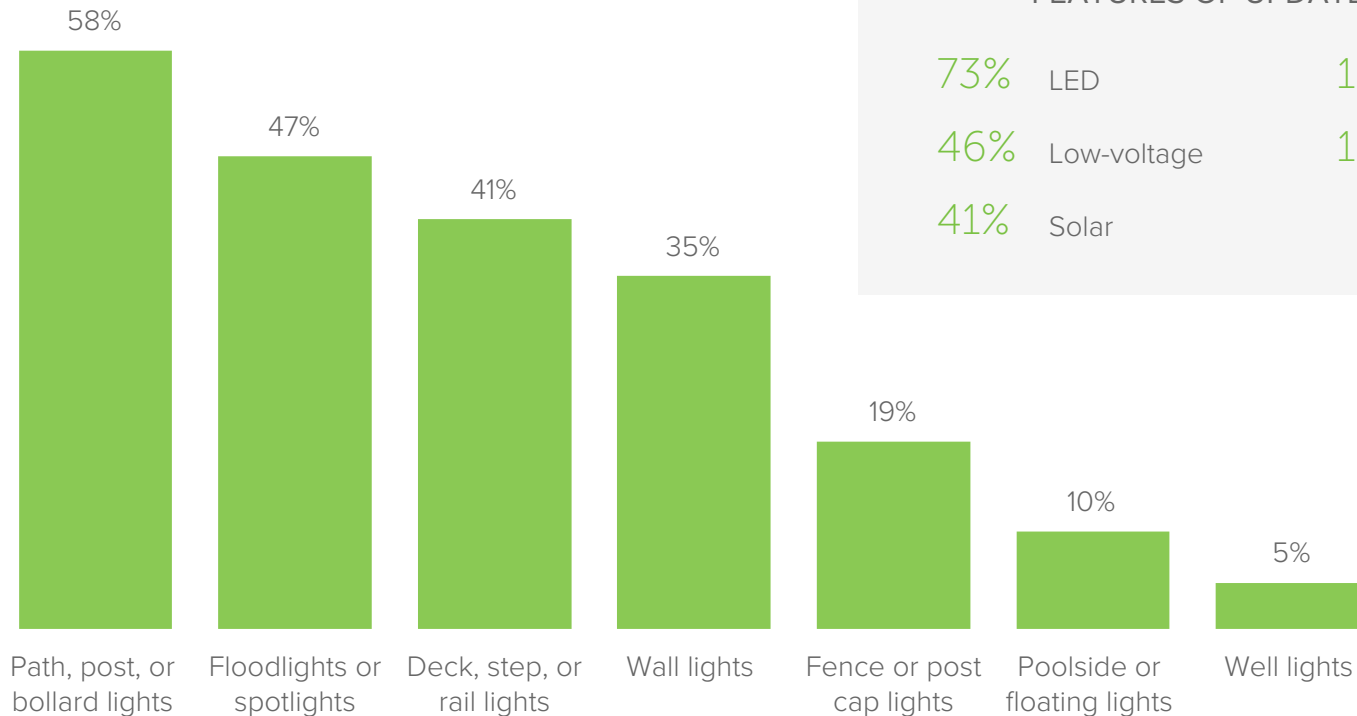
\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who are adding/upgrading their decks as part of their completed, current, or planned outdoor projects in 2016-17.

\*\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who are adding/upgrading pathways, driveways, patios, and terraces as part of their completed, current, or planned outdoor projects in 2016-17.

# Lighting the Smart Way

Nearly half of outdoor-renovating homeowners are updating lighting (45%), from pathway to fence lights. Most are choosing LED lighting (73%) or lighting boasting solar, low-voltage, and/or wireless capabilities. Remarkably, one in five homeowners is choosing “smart” outdoor lighting, which can be controlled by a mobile device or computer.

## UPDATED LIGHTING FIXTURES IN OUTDOOR PROJECTS\*



### FEATURES OF UPDATED LIGHTING\*

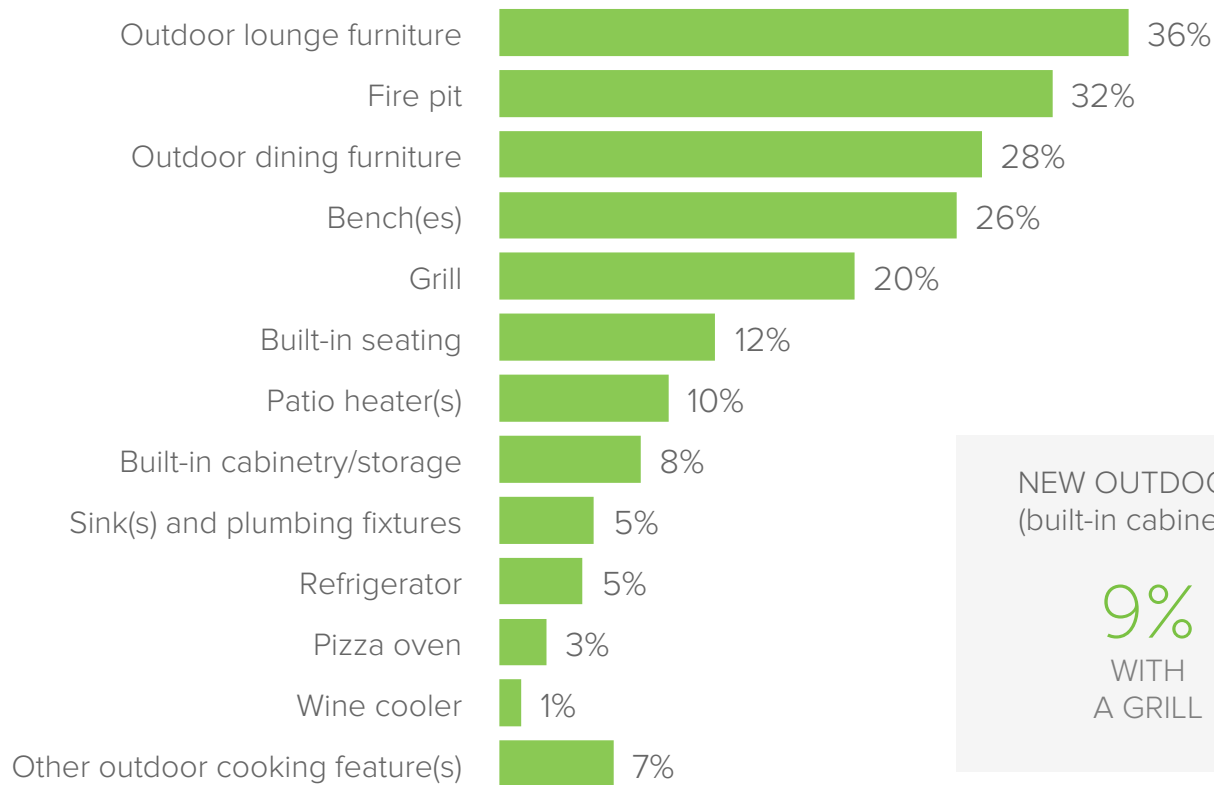
73%	LED	19%	'Smart'
46%	Low-voltage	16%	Wireless
41%	Solar		

\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who are adding/upgrading lighting as part of their completed, current, or planned outdoor projects in 2016-17.

# Beyond the Grill

One in 10 outdoor renovators is investing in outdoor kitchen equipment, such as a grill and either built-in cabinetry, a sink and/or a refrigerator (9%). Additionally, new outdoor lounge furniture (36%), fire pits (32%), and dining furniture (28%) are in high demand, adding comfort, flexibility, and ambiance to the outdoor spaces.

## NEW OUTDOOR LIVING ELEMENTS IN OUTDOOR PROJECTS\*



### NEW OUTDOOR KITCHEN ELEMENTS (built-in cabinetry, sink, or refrigerator)\*

9%  
WITH  
A GRILL

13%  
WITHOUT  
A GRILL

\*Percentages reflect proportion of homeowners who have completed, are currently working on, or are planning an outdoor project during 2016-17.

# Best Sellers for Outside

The top five outdoor categories for the Houzz Shop in 2017 are below, including a best seller for each.

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Outdoor pots and planters



Outdoor rugs



Outdoor wall lights  
and scones



Outdoor cushions  
and pillows



House numbers

\* Links to the product, clockwise from the left: Mason Wall-Mounted Light Oil Rubbed Bronze, Cedar Raised Garden Bed, Watercolor Butterfly Indoor/Outdoor Pillow, Aloha Rug Green, Address Plaque Rust Vertical.

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# Methodology

# Methodology

The survey was sent to registered Houzz users in the U.S. and fielded in February and March of 2017. Homeowners who completed an outdoor renovation project in the past 12 months, are currently working on one, or plan to start one in the next three months shared their plans and progress in our online survey. N=1,000

# Links to Resources on Houzz

Houzz is the easiest way for people to find inspiration, get advice, buy products, and hire the professionals they need to help turn their ideas into reality.

PHOTOS	FIND PROS	SHOP	STORIES
Deck	Landscape Architect	Outdoor Furniture	Gardening
Landscape	Landscape Contractors	Outdoor Lighting	Landscape Design
Patio	Stone Pavers & Concrete	Outdoor Decor	Decks
Porch	Backyard Courts	Lawn & Garden	Patios
Pool	Decks & Patios	Pool & Spa	Paths
Sheds	Driveways & Paving	Fire Pits & Accessories	Pergolas
Exterior	Fencing & Gates	Outdoor Cooking	Pools
	Garden & Landscape Supplies	Outdoor Structures	Porches
	Lawn & Sprinklers	Backyard Play	Outbuildings
	Outdoor Lighting & Media Systems		Outdoor Kitchens
	Outdoor Play		Outdoor Projects
	Pools & Spas		
	Tree Service		