



Apartments.com™

Are You Ready for Gen Z?

A Guide for Multifamily Owners and Operators



Meet Gen Z

Members of Gen Z are leaving the nest, renting their first off-campus apartments, and moving to new neighborhoods and cities to help their careers take off. By 2030, even the youngest members of this generation will be adults in their prime renting years.

As members of Gen Z start out on their renting journey, multifamily communities have the opportunity to build long-term loyalty with these renters.

Here's what you need to know about this important generation, based on the latest Apartments.com research of over 5,000 Gen Z renters.¹

Born between
1997 and 2012
(ages 13–28 in
2025), Gen Z is
poised to be the
next generation
of renters.

They're digital natives in the smartphone era

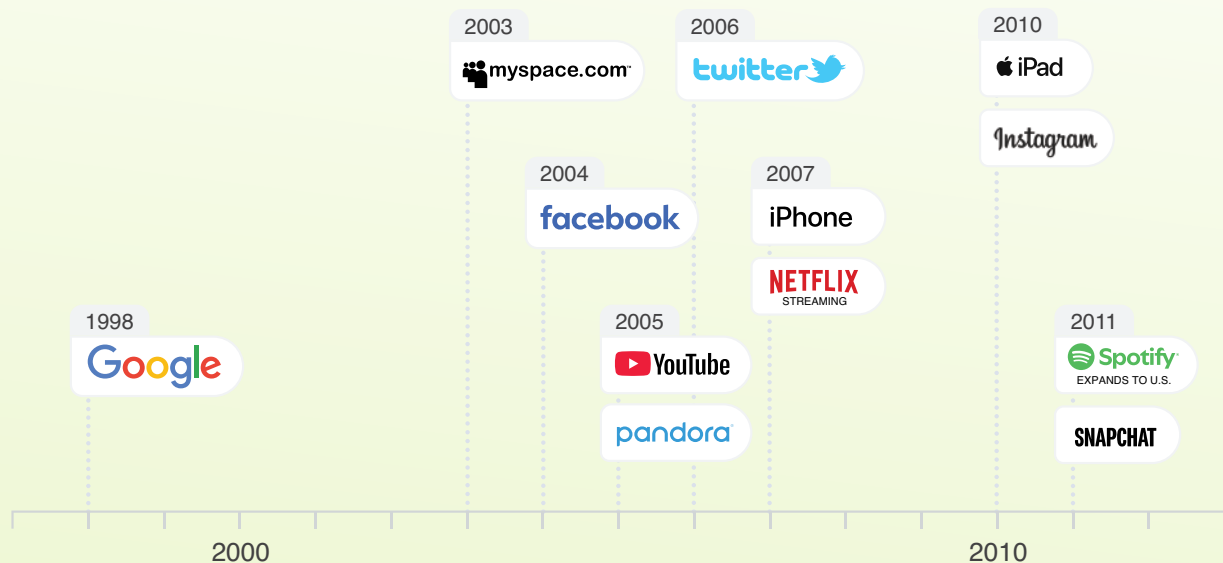
Like millennials, Gen Z grew up using the internet. But unlike their predecessors, Gen Z haven't known anything else. For this generation, smartphones and social media have been central to their childhood.



• 1997

Gen Z is born

2012



The mobile-first mindset.

Is there an app for that? Gen Z is used to doing everything on their phones – staying in touch, ordering food, finding dates, watching TV. No matter the issue, they expect a fast digital solution.



96%

of American teens **use the internet every day**, and compared to a decade ago, twice as many describe themselves as being “almost constantly” online²



Nearly 2 in 5

Gen Z adults **order from food delivery apps** at least once a week³



41%

want to communicate with leasing agents via **chat or instant messaging** – more than any other generation¹



55%

prefer to **book apartment tours online**¹



77%

prefer to **submit their rental applications online**¹

Are you ready?

Design your property website for small screens

Automate leasing and operations. Let residents do everything online: schedule tours, apply, sign the lease, pay rent, submit maintenance tickets, reserve amenity spaces, and more

Offer high-tech amenities and services. Think self-service package lockers, high-speed internet in community spaces, and an app for your resident portal

Send out important communications via multiple digital channels: text, email, app notifications, and social media posts



They expect personalized content on demand

What's playing on TV? Nope, this generation can only imagine streaming the shows they want when they want. On social media, they can't get enough of videos and photos, curated to their personal tastes. Gen Z has been raised on Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, and TikTok.

"Using images of a generic room is misleading."

— 24-year-old woman in Portland, OR



79%

of Gen Z **watch TV exclusively through streaming video platforms¹** – no cable subscription needed



7 in 10

stream music and videos every day¹

“As this is my first apartment, it’s very important to see specific information about the exact unit. Detailed, unit-specific listings build trust and save time during the search process.”

— 18-year-old woman in New York City



99%

want to see unit-specific details in their rental search, and 42% want to see unit-specific 3D tours¹

Are you ready?

Give them 3D tours, videos, and photos of every available unit – not a generic model apartment

Be transparent: provide full pricing information, and enable Apartments.com’s interactive cost calculator to give them a personalized total

Create short, bite-sized content for your social media channels

Make it easy for them to find information – if they can’t find what they need, they won’t call you; they’ll just scroll on to the next property



They want authenticity

Gen Z craves genuineness. It doesn't have to be perfect – but it has to feel real. They're interested in what their peers and favorite influencers think and do. And when they turn to social media to discover brands and products, they're looking for that personal connection.



Almost 40%

of Gen Z adults say **social media has a greater influence on their purchasing decisions** than any other source⁴



27%

report using social media
in their rental search¹



99%

**care about apartment
ratings and reviews** – more
than any other generation¹

Are you ready?

Skip the stock – post real photos
and videos of your community

**Make your onsite staff and
residents** the stars of your
social media

**Partner with local micro- or
nano-influencers** to offer
an inside look at life in your
community

Experiences are where it's at

YOLO. Gen Z wants to live life, not accumulate stuff. When it comes to spending, members of Gen Z are willing to pay for experiences, and they want to share those experiences with the world. They're used to snapping a selfie and curating their online persona to show friends, family, and followers what they've been up to.

From Netflix subscriptions to car-sharing apps, they opt for access over ownership — which makes the renter lifestyle a natural fit.



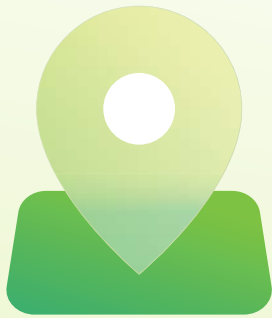
52%

of Gen Z say they **spurge on experiences**, compared to only 29% of baby boomers⁵



Nearly half

of Gen Z renters rank amenities as a top consideration in choosing a place, compared to only 36% of renters in other generations¹



4 in 10

only look for apartments near restaurants and dining, and just as many want to live near parks and hiking opportunities¹

Are you ready?

Don't just advertise your apartments – advertise a lifestyle. Think about the values and lifestyle your community represents, whether it's about staying active, celebrating pets, being eco-conscious, or savoring the dining opportunities in your city

Prioritize resident engagement
by hosting community events throughout the year

Invest in your property's IRL
and digital curb appeal

Show off your community and neighborhood amenities
from your outdoor fire pit and clubhouse to the local restaurants and walking trails

Make it Instagrammable –
create attractive shared spaces that encourage residents to take selfies

Encourage residents to use your community's hashtag
in their social media posts



They adore their fur babies

Pets are family for Gen Z renters. This renter generation is the most likely to live with a pet, and they adore those cats, dogs, and hamsters!



44%

of Gen Z renters **live with a pet¹**



56%

of Gen Z pet owners **have a cat, and 55% have a dog¹**



Only 3%

of Gen Z exclusively want to live in a pet-free community – fewer than any other generation¹

Are you ready?

Rethink your policies with a pet-friendly lens, whether it's allowing pets at all or expanding the number or breeds you accept

Add pet-specific amenities

like a dog park, washing and grooming station, and pet relief areas

Keep a jar of dog treats in your leasing office, and welcome new resident cats and dogs with a goodie bag of treats and toys

Include your furry residents in your communications and community events – yes to four-legged winners of the Halloween costume contest!

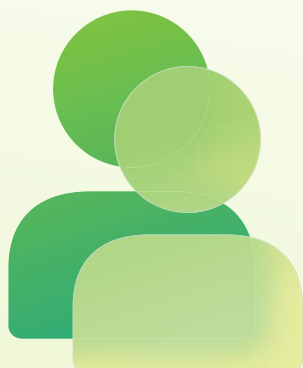
Partner with local businesses

to promote pet-related services and products, such as grooming, veterinary care, dog-walking, and pet supplies



They crave community

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gen Z missed out on important social connections during key years of high school and college. They're used to building community online — think gaming, fandoms, online dating, and so on. But despite their strong desire for real-world connections, this generation is less comfortable initiating in-person interactions than other generations.



Gen Z renters are

134%

more likely than non-Gen Z renters to live with housemates or roommates, and for a third of Gen Z renters, living near friends or family is a must-have¹



58%

of Gen Z say they have **two or more unmet social needs** – more than any other generation⁶



67%

of Gen Z **describe themselves as lonely**⁷

Are you ready?

Plan your amenities with social and connected living in mind –

yes to those rooftop decks, co-working spaces, and game rooms!

Host resident activities that foster community, like trivia nights, hiking meetups, and volunteer events

Got a mixed-use property? Show off that live-work-play lifestyle

and how your community connects to nearby restaurants, shops, and parks

Give your social media followers a taste of your vibrant community calendar

Showcase the stories of real residents and employees

on social media, from testimonials to fun facts

Be ready for the next generation of renters

Gen Z is already transforming the way apartment owners and operators market their properties. Stay ahead of the competition with Apartments.com, the #1 rental network for renters and multifamily communities.

With Apartments.com, you can give Gen Z the immersive, high-tech experience they expect. Take advantage of **Matterport 3D Tours**, comprehensive listings that show off your individual units, and gorgeous photos and videos from our team of professional photographers.

Introduce your neighborhood to first-time renters moving in. Apartments.com's comprehensive neighborhood guides showcase what makes your area special, from restaurants and parks to shopping and transit.

When you need to reach the generation that grew up on social media, Apartments.com's **Social & Reputation Suite** is here to help. Craft authentic, effective social media posts, and build an online reputation that resonates with internet-savvy renters.



Source citations

- ¹ Apartments.com survey of prospective renters, May 2025. Conducted with over 20,000 U.S. adults who plan to move into a rental unit, including 5,365 Gen Z respondents.
- ² Pew Research, 2024.
- ³ YouGov, 2025.
- ⁴ McKinsey, 2019. U.S. Generation Z Survey.
- ⁵ McKinsey, 2024. The evolving role of experiences in travel.
- ⁶ McKinsey, 2022. Addressing the unprecedented behavioral-health challenges facing Generation Z.
- ⁷ Cigna, 2025. Loneliness in America Report.

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