

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

UK, FEBRUARY 2020



MINTEL



“THE POWER OF HOBBIES TO IMPROVE MENTAL WELLBEING IS SET TO DRIVE GROWTH THROUGHOUT 2020. MEANWHILE, CREATIVE HOBBIES ARE ENJOYING A RENEWED INTEREST FROM YOUNGER CROWDS AS URBANITES LOOK TO SWITCH OFF IN THE DIGITAL AGE AND SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH FRIENDS.”

Lauren Reynolds, Analyst

The market

Brits are tight for time

As of 2019 the UK was in the top 10 EU countries for longest working hours (42.5 hours per week), increasing 1.3 hours since 2016. Excessive working hours are impacting consumers’ ability to carve out time for themselves and to participate in their hobbies.

Total wellbeing trend goes mainstream

Consumers both young and old are actively seeking ways to increase overall wellbeing, which includes not only physical health, but also emotional and psychological. Concern over excessive technology use is driving many Brits to seek analogue ways to ‘unwind’ and relax in their free time.

Generation rent’s interior design obsession

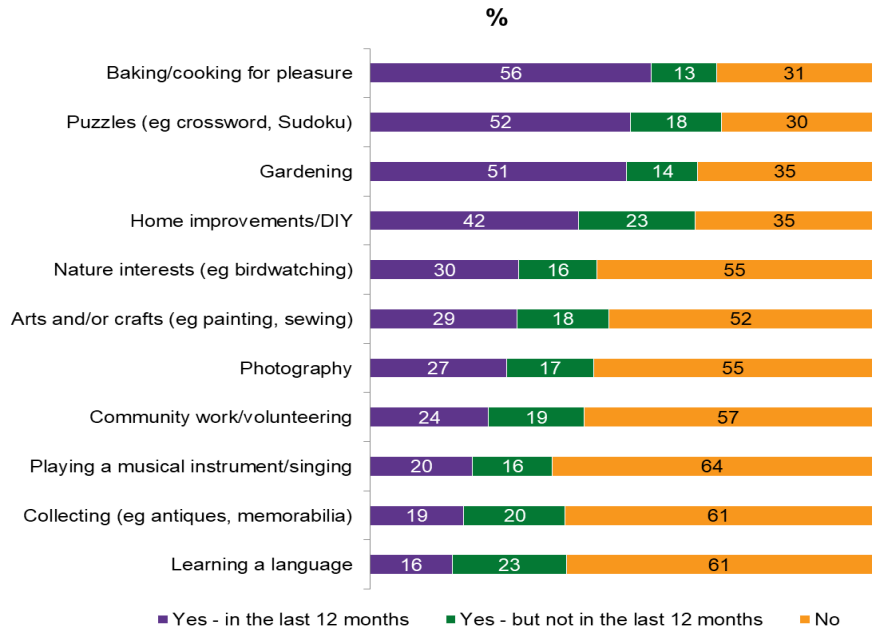
Young Brits are facing a challenging property market, causing many to abandon dreams of home ownership and prolong rental accommodation. Meanwhile, social media sharing is boosting access to home interior inspiration. Millennials are racing to make their homes feel ‘Instagrammable’.

Tech-enabled access shifting hobbies online

The proliferation of technology throughout our daily lives has transformed how consumers spend their leisure time. By removing geographical and financial barriers, instant access to information has made trying new hobbies and interests more accessible than ever.

FIGURE 1: PARTICIPATION IN HOBBIES AND INTERESTS, NOVEMBER 2019

“Have you taken part in the following hobbies and/or interests?”



Base: 2,000 internet users aged 16+
Source: Lightspeed/Mintel

Youthful search for social alternatives

Combined with concerns over physical health and an increasing rejection of past social norms such as excessive late-night drinking, younger generations are now searching for alternative ways to spend time with friends and have fun. Hobby-based leisure activities are meeting this demand for many.

The consumer

A nation of hobbyists

The UK is a nation of hobbyists with 90% of Brits having taken part in a hobby or pursued a surveyed interest in the past year (and 94% having done so at any point). The most popular hobbies are baking/cooking, puzzles, gardening and interior home improvements.

Most popular hobbies also most frequent

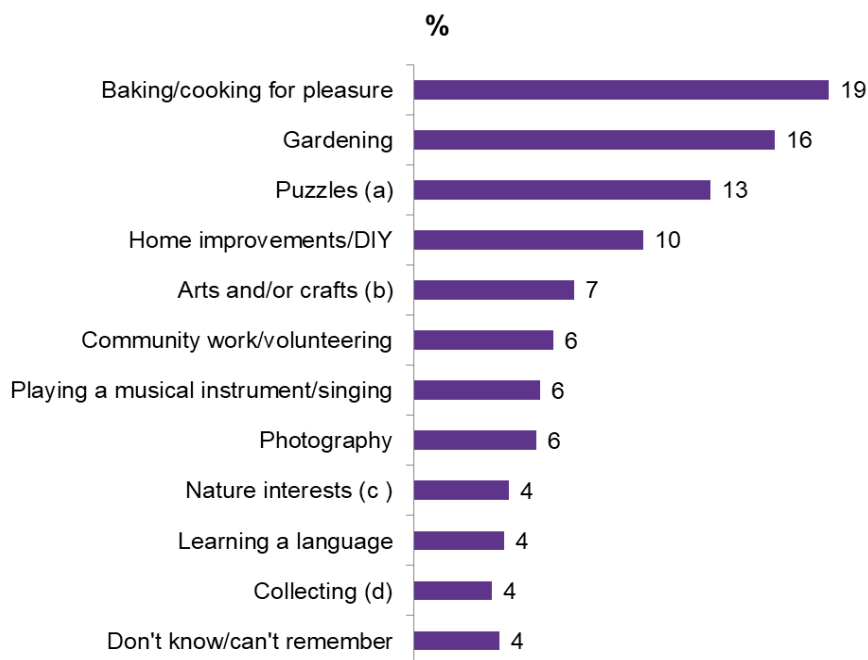
Hobbyists tend to stick to what they know, with the most tried hobbies – baking/cooking, puzzles and gardening – also being the most frequently done.

Fine arts most popular

Fine arts such as painting and drawing are the most popular arts/crafts among consumers, with nearly half (48%) of art hobbyists having done so in the last 12 months. Participation is dominated by women aged 16-34 (with 60% of art hobbyists in this group participating), however, this was still the most popular art/craft for men in this group (55%). Being the most accessible art hobby, it is no surprise this is the most popular in comparison to practical arts which require specialist materials.

FIGURE 2: MOST FREQUENT HOBBY/INTEREST, NOVEMBER 2019

"Which of these hobbies or interests have you spent the most time on over the last 12 months?"



Base: 1,725 internet users aged 16+ who have taken part in a hobby/interest in the last 12 months and indicated which one they spent the most time on

(a) eg crossword, Sudoku

(b) eg painting, sewing

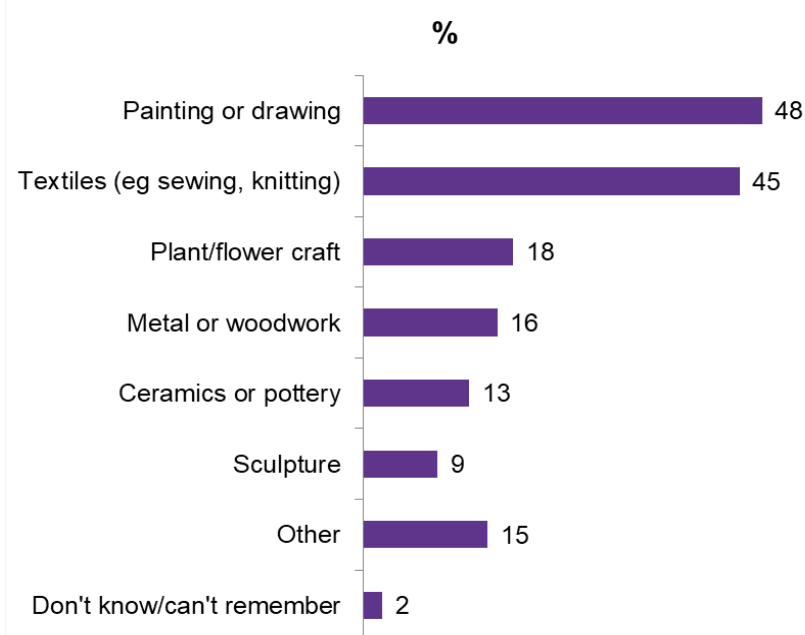
(c) eg birdwatching

(d) eg antiques, memorabilia

Source: Lightspeed/Mintel

FIGURE 3: PARTICIPATION IN ARTS AND CRAFTS HOBBIES, NOVEMBER 2019

"Which arts and/or crafts have you taken part in, in the last 12 months? Please select all that apply."



Base: 587 internet users aged 16+ who have taken part in arts and/or crafts in the last 12 months

Source: Lightspeed/Mintel

Millennials show interest in practical arts

Practical arts such as sculpture, ceramics, metal/woodwork and floristry are dominated by younger age groups. Digital detox trends, concerns over sustainability and self-expression are all driving Millennials and Gen-Zers to learn functional crafts as an alternative to buying new.

Three quarters take time for hobby weekly

The large majority of hobbyists manage to dedicate time to their interests on a weekly basis, with 74% participating in their favourite hobby once a week or more. Over-65s are significantly more likely to participate in their main hobby at least once a week or more, while 35-44s took part least often.

Subscription models can encourage regularity

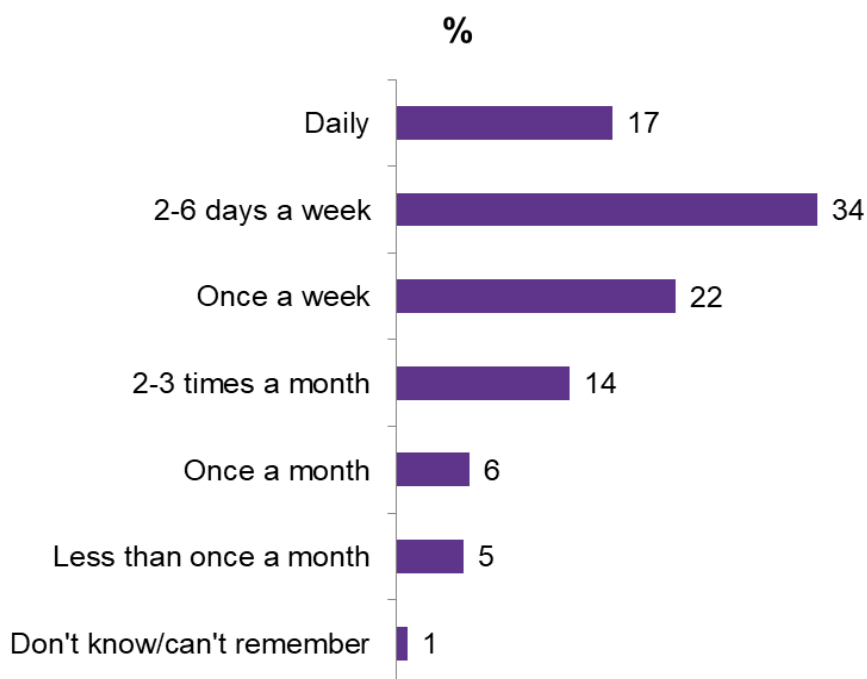
Similar to subscription 'kit' services such as HelloFresh (groceries) or Dollar Shave Club (personal care), hobby kits can encourage more frequent and regular participation and purchasing. Automatic delivery of hobby materials removes the time needed to order manually. Kits with surprise contents can appeal to those consumers who just like to create, while giving consumers a say in their kit contents can assist skill building.

Social preferences split between ages

Just over half of Brits most enjoy spending their free time alone (52%), whilst 42% most enjoy socialising in small groups and a mere 2% most enjoy being with large groups of people. However, 20-34s prefer more social settings while over-45s prefer time alone.

FIGURE 4: PARTICIPATION FREQUENCY OF HOBBY/INTEREST SPENT MOST TIME ON, NOVEMBER 2019

"How often have you taken part in [hobby spent most time on] in the last 12 months?"



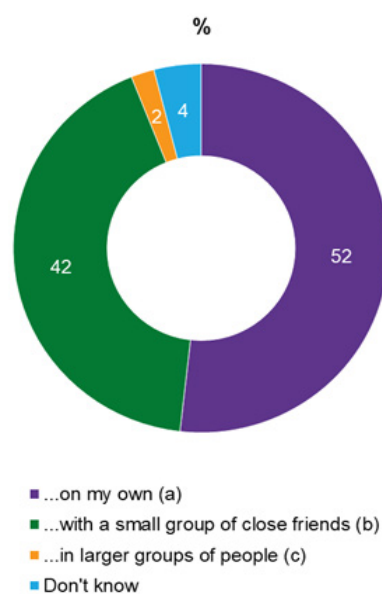
Base: 1,725 internet users aged 16+ who have taken part in a hobby/interest in the last 12 months and specified which one they spend the most time doing

Source: Lightspeed/Mintel

FIGURE 5: LEISURE TIME PREFERENCES, NOVEMBER 2019

"Thinking about how you spend your spare time, which one of the following statements best applies to you?"

I most enjoy spending my free time...



Base: 2,000 internet users aged 16+

(a) eg reading, listening to music

(b) eg socialising in a small group

(c) eg team sports, going to parties

Source: Lightspeed/Mintel

Online videos now on par with print media

As a source of information, online videos are now just as popular as print and word of mouth, with 18% of hobbyists most preferring to learn about their favourite hobby this way. Videos are favoured not only due to online accessibility, but also because they can provide rich and detailed instruction in both visual and audio formats (see Information Sources).

Relaxation key driver

Relaxation is by far the most popular motivator for hobby participation, with 57% of consumers choosing this as one of their top three motivations. This is even more important to older consumers and parents with children aged 18+. As mental health continues to be in the spotlight, hobby operators that position their services and products as beneficial in this respect stand to benefit (see Hobby Motivations).

What we think

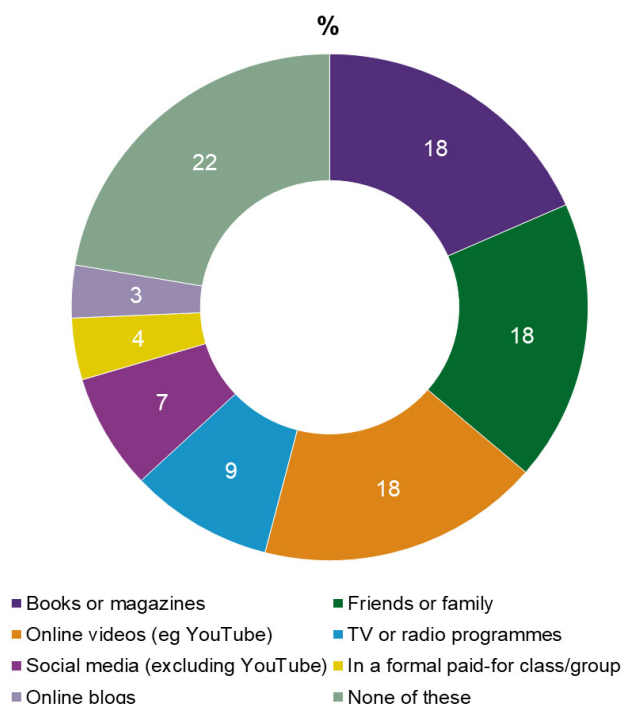
Motivations for taking part in hobbies vary by generation. Many older hobbyists prefer to spend time alone and are driven to participate in order to unwind and relax. Targeting these consumers can be achieved by removing barriers to access, for example through delivering 'hobby kit' subscriptions and online instructional videos.

Meanwhile, younger hobbyists are much more likely to use their interests as a catalyst for socialising, or to create and build a skill. Fun and group-based opportunities to participate in creative activities are likely to appeal.

Brands also have opportunities to promote hobbies and interests as being positive for mental wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

FIGURE 6: INFORMATION SOURCES FOR MOST FREQUENTLY DONE HOBBY/INTEREST, NOVEMBER 2019

"How do you most prefer to learn about [hobby spent most time on]?"

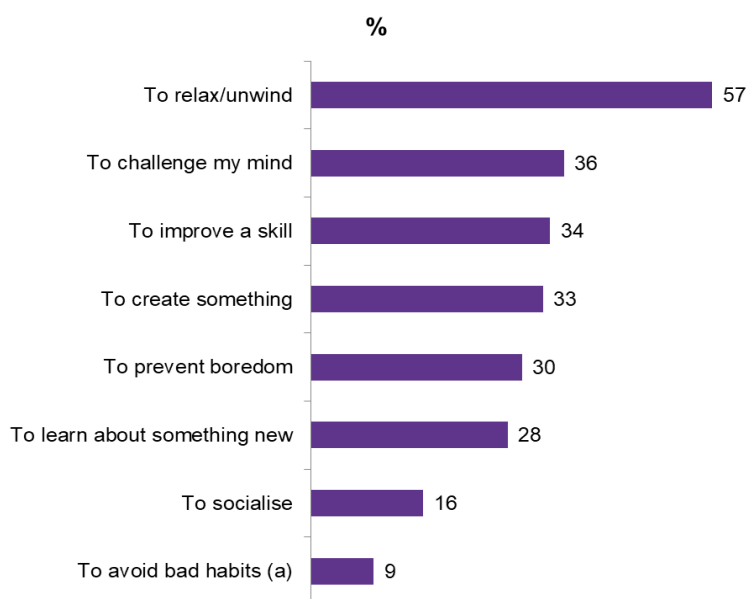


Base: 1,725 internet users aged 16+ who have taken part in a hobby/interest in the last 12 months and specified which one they spend the most time doing

Source: Lightspeed/Mintel

FIGURE 7: MOTIVATION FOR HOBBY/INTEREST PARTICIPATION, NOVEMBER 2019

"Which of the following are the most important reasons you have taken part in hobbies/interests over the last 12 months? Please rank up to 3, with 1 being the most important – NET."



Base: 1,795 internet users aged 16+ who have taken part in a hobby/interest in the last 12 months
(a) eg excessive phone use

Source: Lightspeed/Mintel

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