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Have you ever walked into a newly built home and felt as though the walls were closing in? You're not alone. While modern homes boast sleek designs, smart features, and luxurious amenities, they often leave buyers wondering, "Why does it feel so small?" The answer is not as straightforward as rising land prices or developer decisions. As urban landscapes grow denser and affordability takes centre stage, compact homes have become the norm—but at what cost? Let's understand why newly built homes feel smaller and whether that is a compromise.

EVOLVING DESIGN TRENDS AND SPACE OPTIMISATION

Modern homes prioritise efficient

as living rooms that double as home offices, are becoming increasingly common. However, this focus on functionality can often lead to a sense of reduced spaciousness, especially for buyers accustomed to traditional layouts with separate, larger rooms.

RIISING LAND COSTS AND CONSTRUCTION CHALLENGES

The cost of land in urban areas has skyrocketed over the past dec-

Land availability in metro cities is one of the major hurdles that developers face while building large societies. Although liquidity is not much of a hurdle for large and listed developers, the overall cost of construction, including input and labour costs, has gone up significantly

results in reduced carpet areas within homes, with more space allocated to common areas and state-of-the-art amenities."

Additionally, construction costs, including materials and labour, have risen significantly. Kumar notes, "Land availability in cities and rising construction costs make it hard to offer larger layouts without increasing the total cost of the house." This results in more compact designs

green and open spaces within the society is finding many takers. Thus, to attract buyers, developers are laying major emphasis on outside spaces and amenities." Buyers also prioritise modern amenities like smart home technology, eco-friendly features, and community facilities such as co-working areas. Ranjan observes, "Buyers increasingly desire convenience and lifestyle features. Developers are focusing on compact yet functional layouts to integrate these amenities, often at the cost of larger living spaces."

However, this doesn't mean buyers are entirely compromising on comfort. Jain adds, "By prioritising



While smaller homes are becoming the norm in urban areas, they are often marketed as smart homes that maximise functionality. Features like foldable furniture, built-in storage, and minimalist designs create a perception of spaciousness, even in compact layouts. "Although homes these days feel smaller, I don't see it as a negative. I prefer a well-designed, compact home that's easier to maintain and comes with great amenities. For me, it's about quality of life, not the size of the space. If it's functional, within my budget, and located in a good neighbourhood, I'm happy to compromise on square footage," says Neha Sharma, a marketing professional and first-time homebuyer.

The curious case of shrinking homes

New homes are starting to feel smaller. Is it a design issue or simply the way things are now? Experts weigh in

cy and functionality, which is reflected in their compact designs. Abhishek Jain, COO of a real estate development company, explains, "Newly built homes often feel smaller due to more efficient use of space and modern design trends that prioritise open layouts and multifunctional areas. These homes are designed to offer comfort and convenience, maximising every square foot for a truly practical living experience."

Rajeev Ranjan, co-founder and CEO of The Mentors Real Estate Advisory Pvt. Ltd., points out, "Developers are embracing open layouts and lighter colour schemes to foster a sense of openness and flow. Clever storage solutions and vertical design elements also help make rooms feel larger without increasing the actual square footage." Multifunctional spaces, such



ade, forcing developers to make tough choices about space. Santhosh Kumar, vice chairman of Anarock Group, highlights, "Developers have increased the loading to 40-45 per cent of the total super built-up area, from the erstwhile 30-35 per cent. This

that meet budgetary constraints.

SHIFT IN BUYER PREFERENCES

Homebuyers have also contributed to the trend of smaller homes. Kumar mentions, "With growing awareness and inclination towards health and fitness, the need for

Today's homebuyers increasingly prioritise convenience and lifestyle features like smart home technology, energy-efficient appliances, and community-centric amenities (such as gyms, co-working spaces, and green areas). These amenities are often integrated into smaller, more efficient layouts to maximise both functionality and value

quality over quantity, these smaller spaces still offer a high standard of

living with the convenience and luxury that today's buyers desire."



ARE SMALLER HOMES THE NEW NORM?

The sense that homes are shrinking is also influenced by psychological factors. Aanchal Mishra, a voiceover artist and a potential homebuyer, notes, "Flats these days feel noticeably smaller than they used to, yet the prices seem to be climbing higher than ever. It's becoming increasingly difficult to justify the value of what you're paying for, especially when space is such an important factor for homebuyers."

THE BIG PICTURE

The rise of shrinking homes reflects a confluence of economic realities, changing buyer preferences, and evolving design philosophies. While some buyers may consider compact homes as a compromise, others see them as a practical solution to the challenges of urban living.

Whether this trend will continue depends largely on market dynamics and buyer feedback. For now, compact homes are here to stay.

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Decorating your home is no mean feat. However, a smart application of basic elements can beautify your space and give it a renewed look. With a whole lot of home decor items readily available online and in stores, you can bring about these changes easily in your home. Ultimately, there are no right or wrong rules to decorating your space. Instead, what matters is making it comfortable and giving it a personal touch. After all, your home should be a reflection of you.

LUXE LIGHTING

Ranging from clusters of bare bulbs to crystal chandeliers, the right lighting arrangement can change the aesthetics of almost any room, irrespective of its size. "While lights do have extensive practical use, they also make for an important decorative element. When it comes to chandeliers, we often see large homes and spaces using rustic chandeliers to introduce a vintage-like appeal. Homes with smaller rooms feature minimalist chandeliers made of bare light bulbs, softer lights, and minimal glass and crystal. A new trend in this category is the increasing use of offbeat shapes in chandeliers. Modern homemakers are now using horizontal and abstract shapes or forms to cover larger spaces as compared to the round and wide chandeliers," shares Gopika



Breathe new life into your abode

From textured flooring and multicoloured murals to bespoke chandeliers and plush upholstery, these design elements can be effectively utilised to elevate your home

Lakhani, an interior design professor. The key to making your home luxurious most often lies in the small details. Experts recommend adding dimmers to the chandeliers to help you set the right ambience and mood.

SURFACE DESIGN

Wall and floor textures, murals, and wallpapers are predicted to trend in 2025, and for good reason. Gone are the days when people were required to vacate their rooms for days and even weeks to add artistic details to their walls. With ready-made mural wallpapers and complementary textured flooring, the same can be

done within a few days. Veena Shrinivasan, a management professional, recently used wallpaper to create a mural in her living room. She shares, "Painting murals on walls usually takes several days. And so, as advised by my interior designer, I sent a plain wallpaper to a mural artist in Jaipur. He hand-painted the mural and we got it installed on our wall within two days of its arrival. It was an easy and cost-effective process than getting the design painted directly on the walls. We matched the flooring to the murals, using carpets in similar shades. This helped elevate the mural and gave the room a regal look,

which was in keeping with the design brief."

FABRIC FURNISHINGS

Vintage, salvaged and retro pieces have made their way to homes and commercial spaces. Janak Shah, an interior designer, says, "The only way to elevate the look of your furniture is to use good quality upholstery. Colourful, comfortable and subtle textures add depth and character to a room, if used correctly. Softer fabrics such as faux fur, raw cotton, velvet and even linen can be used to enhance the look of your home."

So, get inspired to elevate your decor that reflects your taste and personality.

How Mocha Mousse brews up stylish spaces

A rich brown hue, Mocha Mousse can be everyone's cup of coffee, if one knows how to channel it perfectly. Here's our expert-approved guide which will help you do just that

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When Pantone announced the Colour of the Year, Mocha Mousse, it seemed like something picked from a dessert menu—comforting, warm, and indulgent. And these are the exact stylistic qualities that the shade offers. Described as a mellow, softer form of brown, the colour evokes comfort and chic in equal measure. As it takes over the zeitgeist, it will naturally seep into our homes. Kapil Vaishnani, the founder of Bonasila Planters, affirms, "This rich yet earthy brown tone stands for comfort, luxury and timelessness, as its versatility bridges traditional elegance with modern minimalism." So, let's discuss the best ways to feature this delicious-looking shade in living spaces.

WOODWORKS

With a coffee-like, chocolatey tone, the colour is perfect for designing a cosy living room or a contemporary home office, believes Akhilesh Chitlangia, managing director and CEO, Duroply Industries Limited. "Mocha Mousse creates a sophisticated, grounded atmosphere, reminding us to slow down, savour life's details, and embrace elegance. The deep connection between this shade and the organic warmth of wood can be brought to life through wood finishes and textures, from intricate burls to smooth grains. Imagine elevating your interiors with striking wood furniture like coffee tables and cabinetry or wrapping your walls in complementary wood panelling to celebrate comfort and refinement," he shares.

A SPRINKLE OF STYLE

As the colour is meant to create inviting spaces, use it to paint accent walls and ceilings or create an ombre effect. "Pair the hue with natural materials like rattan, oak, or linen. Besides, consider statement chairs or a plush sofa in this shade to



anchor the space. Layer it with muted pastels or bold jewel tones featured in throws, cushions, and artwork to create visual interest," suggests Sanjana Paramhans, an interior and experiential designer at White Noise Design Studio.

FOR A REFINED FINISH

Besides walls and wooden accents, incorporate the colour through coffee-toned marble countertops or flooring. Ramesh Bhandari, chief executive secretary and director of A-Class Marble, states, "Decor pieces like marble vases, sculptures, or backslashes can infuse the warm, subtle effect of Mocha Mousse without overwhelming the space. Complement these with classic white or cream options alongside golden or matte black fixtures to infuse a sense of understated luxury."

COME OUT AND COLOUR PLAY

Mocha Mousse is also ideal for enhancing outdoor environments. Sowmya Lakhamraju, an architect and the founder of Kiasma Studio, shares, "Its earthy

Mocha Mousse creates a sophisticated, grounded atmosphere, reminding us to slow down, savour life's details, and embrace elegance

undertones enhance landscape elements, blending seamlessly with greenery and natural textures. So, feature this shade in patio seating or garden benches. Incorporate it further through cushions, planters, pergola structures, or pathways to maintain a cohesive palette. Paired with terracotta, stone, or weathered wood, it adds depth to patios and garden areas." Lastly, he suggests accentuating the look with soft lighting or contrasting greenery for a timeless appearance.

COSY CORNERS

It's easy to get carried away with all the design possibilities and forget the ultimate feature of this shade: comfort. "Opt for bed linens and duvet covers in this colour to assemble a serene nest in your bedroom. Combine these with soft throws, quilted blankets, or textured runners in neutral shades," advises Navya Khanna, the co-founder and creative director of Sadyaska.

Naturally, like a comforting cup of cocoa, Mocha Mousse can add a touch of warmth and indulgence to any home.

GET IN TOUCH

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