



Generational Trends 2025

# Baby Boomers and the Future of Payments

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# Overview

Baby Boomers, often dubbed the wealthiest generation in history, have seen financial trends come and go, and they've mastered the art of sticking with what works.

They aren't stuck in the past, but they're not rushing into every shiny new payment trend either. For them, **paying is about reliability, security, and having options that work** - whether they're at home or travelling the world.

This generation grew up in an era where cash was king, and credit cards felt aspirational. Over the years, they've embraced debit and credit cards as their everyday tools, with credit cards taking centre stage for bigger buys like travel and home upgrades.

**The added perks - travel insurance, loyalty points, and fraud protection - are exactly the kind of practical benefits they value.** Cash still plays a role, often for local markets or service-based payments where it just makes life simpler. But when it comes to mobile wallets, wearables, or QR codes, Boomers are more hesitant. They're happy sticking to physical cards and familiar processes rather than downloading another app they don't feel they need.

**Security is at the top of their priority list.** Any hint of hidden fees or unclear refund policies is enough to send them elsewhere. They want transparency at the checkout and confidence that their payment method won't let them down, especially online.

**But being cautious doesn't mean being anti-tech.** Boomers are open to trying new things - if it makes their lives easier and feels safe. Fee-free currency conversions for travel or straightforward online payments? Those get their attention.

For merchants, appealing to Boomers means offering secure, fuss-free options, and loyalty programmes that reward their trust. Keep things clear, dependable, and rewarding, and they'll not only spend - but they'll also keep coming back.



# Baby Boomer payment preferences

54%

prefer **debit or credit cards** as the most secure payment method **in online retail**

40%

turn to **credit cards** for **in-store consumer electronics**

61%

rank **security** as their **top payment priority**

11%

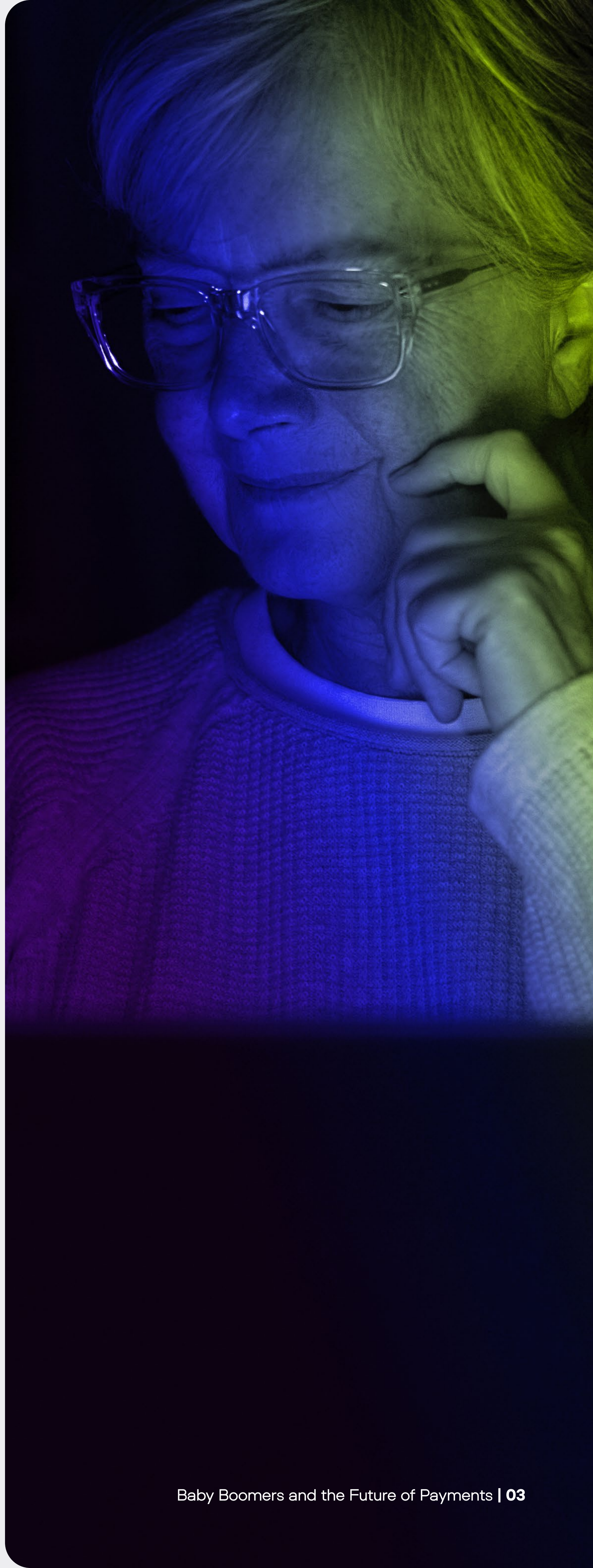
**use cash** to pay every day

20%

**make contactless payments** 2 to 3 days a week

44%

state **credit card is their preferred payment method** when **booking their holidays**



# Getting to know Baby Boomers

**Born between 1946 and 1964**, Baby Boomers are now in their late 50s to late 70s - and they've lived through it all. From the dawn of television to smartphones and smart homes, they've witnessed and adapted to massive change. But while the world has sped up around them, this generation has mastered the art of choosing what's worth their time and effort.

Often seen as the 'wealthiest generation', Boomers built their lives around hard work, home ownership, and financial stability - and now they're reaping the benefits. Retirement for many doesn't mean slowing down; it means travelling the world, upgrading their homes, and enjoying their hard-earned comfort. Whether it's a bucket-list holiday or sprucing up the garden, they're keen to make the most of their time and money.

However, despite their buying power, they don't spend impulsively. Boomers take pride in being savvy shoppers - they'll read reviews, compare options, and seek loyalty perks before hitting the buy button.

They're also a generation that values face-to-face interactions. Many still prefer in-store experiences where they can touch and see products before making a decision. That said, they've embraced online shopping too, but only when the experience is smooth, informative, and hassle-free. Glitchy sites and vague descriptions? They're out.

Security is their top priority, whether they're booking flights or paying for groceries. They've seen how scams have evolved over the years, so if a retailer or brand doesn't seem trustworthy, Boomers won't hesitate to look elsewhere.

They strike a perfect balance—embracing innovation without blindly chasing tech trends, yet staying forward-thinking without clinging to the past. Contactless cards? Yes. Loyalty apps that streamline the shopping experience? Absolutely. They're open to innovation - as long as it feels useful and secure.

Boomers have a lot to offer to businesses that get it right. If you can deliver convenience, transparency, and trust, you're not just gaining a customer - you're earning a loyal advocate who will happily recommend your brand to family and friends.

## How Baby Boomers pay

### Staying in hotels

For hotel stays, credit cards take the lead, with almost half of Baby Boomers using them at check-in. The draw? Travel perks, purchase protection, and the convenience of deferring payment. Debit cards still hold a significant share, preferred by around **30%** of Boomers who want to avoid accruing debt.

Cash is mostly reserved for tipping staff, with only **6%** using it for their main payments. Mobile wallets barely make a dent, with just **1%** adoption, highlighting Boomers' inclination to stick with what they know when it comes to travel accommodations.



#### Merchant tip

Promote loyalty rewards and offer flexible pay-at-check-in to reassure guests wary of pre-authorisation.

## Baby Boomers in numbers

**30%**

love **sharing new technology and apps** with friends and family

**70%**

**aren't intimidated or overwhelmed** by new technology

**69%**

of Baby Boomers **prefer brands to contact them via email**

**1h 48m**

the average time **they spend per day** on **Facebook and Instagram**

**99%**

plan to take **at least one leisure trip per year**

**\$548 billion**

**the amount** this generation **spends every year**

## Spending in style: fashion

Debit cards lead the way for Boomers shopping for clothes and accessories, with **40%** choosing them for their convenience and budget control.

Credit cards remain popular for bigger purchases or at stores with attractive loyalty programmes, with over **31%** using them.

Cash still has a place, used by **13%** of Boomers for smaller purchases, especially in independent shops. Mobile wallets, on the other hand, barely feature, with only **2%** choosing this option when shopping for fashion.



### Merchant tip

Highlight secure payment options at checkout and offer loyalty points or exclusive discounts for frequent shoppers. Creating a seamless checkout experience can encourage Boomers to return.

## Cafés, restaurants and pubs

Debit cards are the top pick for Baby Boomers dining out, with over a third **(36%)** opting for them due to their ease and familiarity.

Credit cards follow closely behind with **30%**, appealing to those who enjoy the added security and rewards points - perfect for celebratory meals or larger group bookings.

Interestingly, cash still makes an appearance, used by **one in five Boomers**, often for smaller outings or where tipping is involved. However, mobile wallets barely register, with only **2%** of Boomers choosing them in hospitality settings, reflecting their preference for tried-and-trusted methods.



### Merchant tip

Add straightforward tipping to your payment system and offer loyalty perks like free desserts or early booking to encourage repeat diners.



## Ticket to ride

Credit cards are the clear favourite for Boomers booking travel or event tickets, with **46%** using them for these high-value purchases.

The perks - like travel insurance and fraud protection - make credit cards an obvious choice for long-distance holidays and large events. Debit cards are also used by **39%**, mainly for smaller, domestic trips, or ticket purchases. Mobile wallets barely make an appearance, with just **1%** of Baby Boomers adopting this method for larger purchases, demonstrating their preference for established methods when planning memorable experiences.

### Merchant tip

Provide detailed refund policies and travel-friendly perks at checkout. Collaborating with loyalty schemes or offering exclusive ticket bundles can appeal to Boomers' preference for value and security.

### Merchant tip

Reward repeat purchases with loyalty points and simplify payments. Add features like 'buy online, collect in-store' to boost convenience without overwhelming customers.

## Feeling healthy

Debit cards are the go-to payment method for Boomers buying essentials at pharmacies or cosmetics stores, with **43%** choosing them for day-to-day purchases.

Credit cards are reserved for higher-value items like supplements or skincare bundles, used by over a quarter of Boomers.

Cash remains in use by **17%** of Baby Boomers, often for smaller, convenience-led purchases. Mobile wallets trail far behind, with just **2%** adoption, highlighting that this generation favours familiar card payments for health and wellness buys.

## Cruising with cards

Credit cards come out on top for Baby Boomers when it comes to cruise payments, with nearly **30%** opting for them to cover everything from excursions to onboard spending.

Debit cards follow behind at **13%**, indicating a preference for controlled spending among some travellers.

Cash use drops to just **4%**, highlighting the impracticality of physical currency in this setting. Mobile wallets and wearables are virtually unused, showing that Boomers prefer traditional payment methods when enjoying experience-based travel.



### Merchant tip

Offer cruise packages with pre-paid options and loyalty perks for return customers. Consider digital wristbands linked to cards for convenience without straying too far from familiar payment habits.

## Payment priorities

# 41%

prefer **credit cards** for buying **medium-value purchases** (£51 to £200)

# 54%

see **credit and debit cards** as the **most secure payment method** for online purchases

# 30%

choose **debit cards** for **making purchases in hotels**

# 2%

prefer **mobile wallets** for **snapping up fashion and accessories**

# What's next for Baby Boomers?

## Mobile wallets

While mobile wallets like Apple Pay and Google Pay dominate younger generations' payment preferences, Baby Boomers aren't quite convinced. Only **1%** use mobile wallets regularly for big-ticket purchases, preferring cards for convenience and security. They trust what they can physically hold and are wary of potential security risks.

But there's a gap in awareness too. Many Boomers aren't sure how digital wallets work or assume they're only useful for small purchases. When they understand the added layers of protection and convenience, interest tends to grow.

## Wearables and biometrics

Smart watches and biometric payments (like fingerprint or facial recognition) are met with curiosity by some Boomers, but not enough to make them mainstream yet. 8% of Boomers say they're interested in wearable payments, and also 18% are open to biometrics. The main hesitation? Handing over sensitive data.

For many Boomers, using a smartwatch to pay seems like an unnecessary leap when their debit card or credit card works just fine. However, they're intrigued when wearables simplify specific experiences, like fitness-tracking apps that integrate payments for gym visits or events.



### Merchant tip

Educate, don't push. Use clear in-store signage or online videos to show how mobile wallets work and the security benefits they offer. Reassure customers that they can still rely on their trusted payment methods if they prefer.



### Merchant tip

Provide options that feel familiar but offer small upgrades. Think of loyalty rewards linked to wearables but keep the experience simple and secure.

# Cryptocurrency and blockchain

Cryptocurrency might be exciting to Gen Z and millennials, but Boomers are far more cautious - only **5%** have shown any real interest. It's not just the volatility of the market; it's the complexity and the lack of clear benefits.

That said, Boomers do see potential in blockchain-backed payment solutions, particularly for international payments where fees can add up. If businesses can position blockchain as a seamless, fee-saving tool rather than a tech buzzword, there's potential for growth.

In fact, hidden fees, confusing refund policies, and unclear terms are all flagged as frustrations that erode trust.

Boomers appreciate businesses that put transparency first - whether it's by clearly displaying refund policies or explaining charges upfront. They're loyal to companies that make security feel effortless.

## Merchant tip

Avoid crypto jargon and focus on what blockchain payments do. Highlight practical benefits like faster refunds and lower international fees rather than hyping technology for its own sake.

## Merchant tip

Add trust signals during checkout, like 'verified by' logos or secure padlock icons, and make refund processes fast and simple. Providing two-factor authentication options can also reassure more cautious users.

# Feeling secure

When asked about their payment preferences, Boomers overwhelmingly rank security as their top concern. More than **60%** see it as non-negotiable and a top priority when they are choosing a payment method, and **43%** worry about fraud when using digital payments.

# Loyalty schemes and real rewards

While Boomers aren't rushing to embrace mobile wallets, they do love a good loyalty scheme. Cashback, points that translate into discounts, and offers tied to their favourite stores all resonate. But the key is simplicity. Complicated apps and point-tracking systems won't win their attention - keeping it simple will.



#### Merchant tip

Keep your loyalty rewards straightforward: think points that can be used like cash at checkout. Offer printed receipts or email reminders of their rewards so they don't have to dig around for an app.

## Frustration with refunds and returns

Boomers expect refunds to be handled quickly and without hassle. Long waiting times, cumbersome online forms, or unresponsive customer service can be deal-breakers. This generation doesn't want to chase their money, they want clarity and speed.








#### Merchant tip

Offer automated refund status updates so customers know exactly where they stand. Quick refunds for cancelled transactions can significantly boost trust and satisfaction.

## Looking ahead

Boomers might not be early adopters, but they're not closed off to innovation. They'll embrace new payment methods if the value and security are crystal clear. For merchants, the focus shouldn't be on overwhelming Boomers with too many options; it's about making their payment experiences simple, trustworthy, and rewarding. Get that right, and this generation will remain loyal customers with spending power to match.

## Baby Boomers' wishlist

- 
**72%** of Baby Boomers **want to avoid bank card fees abroad.**
- 
**85%** prioritise **widely accepted payment methods when travelling.**
- 
**59%** value **instant currency conversion options.**
- 
**18%** are interested in **wearable payment options**
- 
**32%** prioritise **multi-currency wallets for easy travel spending.**

## Research methodology

To better understand consumers' payment preferences, PXP - the leading omnichannel global payment platform and innovative industry disruptor - partnered with **Censuswide** to conduct a survey of **2,000-plus consumers aged 18 and above**. Censuswide abides by and employs members of the **Market Research Society** and follows the **MRS code of conduct** and **ESOMAR principles**. Censuswide is also a member of the **British Polling Council**.

## Additional sources

Kantar | Paper, Plastic or Pixels: Payment Preferences by Generation

PYMNTS | Boomers Lead Trend Toward Paying for Necessities With Subscriptions

PYMNTS | Nearly 40% of Boomers Don't Know How Pay-by-Bank Payments Work

Splitit | Nearly 75% of Baby Boomers Will Use Split Payments for Holiday Gifts

Razorfish | Razorfish Study Reveals Baby Boomers' Strong Technology Affinity

babyboomers.com | How Baby Boomers and Millennials Adapt to Technology

EMBRYO | Statistics on social media use by generation

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PXP is a tech platform that makes commerce simpler, better, and more connected. With just one connection to PXP, merchants can unlock a world of commerce across online, mobile, and point-of-sale channels. Powered by a suite of financial services, multiple acquiring connections—including an in-house acquiring license—and diverse alternative payment methods, PXP processes over €30 billion annually through our unified gateway.

Connect once to our global commerce ecosystem to supercharge your growth by unifying payments, streamlining operations, and getting access endless opportunities.

Contact us to get all the payment tools you need to grow your business at [pxp.io](https://pxp.io) and read [the PXP blog](#) for more insights.

