

Common Characteristics of Women-Owned Businesses

What attributes and concerns are women-owned businesses most likely to share in 2025?

1. **Women-owned businesses are disproportionately small and microbusinesses.**

	Women-Owned Businesses	Male-Owned Businesses
Average Annual Revenue	\$2,002,000	\$4,804,000

Source: Wells Fargo – Ventureneer Impact of Women-Owned Businesses 2025

	Women-Owned Businesses	Male-Owned Businesses
Average # of Employees Among Employer Businesses	9.1	13.2

Source: Wells Fargo – Ventureneer Impact of Women-Owned Businesses 2025

Although women-owned businesses don't constitute a majority of nonemployer firms or sole proprietorships, women-owned businesses are more likely than male-owned counterparts to be nonemployer firms or sole proprietorships.

	Women-Owned Businesses	Male-Owned Businesses
Percentage of All Firms That are Nonemployers	90.2%	81.7%

Source: Wells Fargo – Ventureneer Impact of Women-Owned Businesses 2025

	Women-Owned	Male-Owned	Other (Publicly-Owned, etc.)
Share of All Employer Firms	22.9%	59.8%	17.2%
Share of All Nonemployer Firms	42.5%	54.0%	3.5%

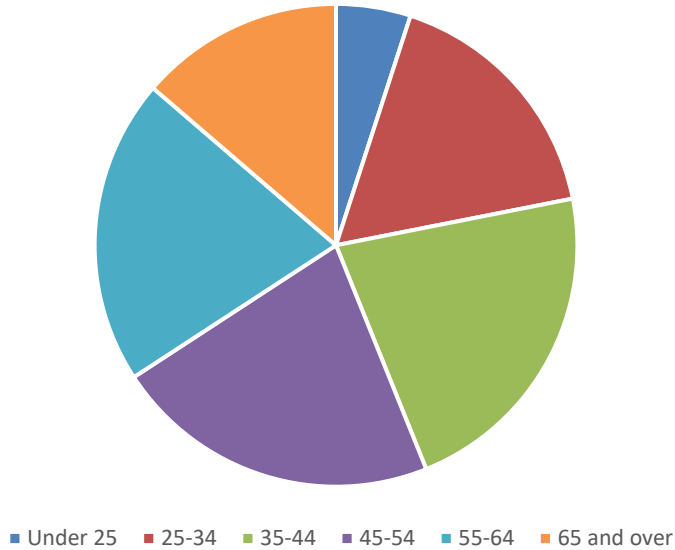
Source: Wells Fargo – Ventureneer Impact of Women-Owned Businesses 2025

2. **Women-owned businesses and women owners are disproportionately young, and women have had shorter tenures as owners than men.**

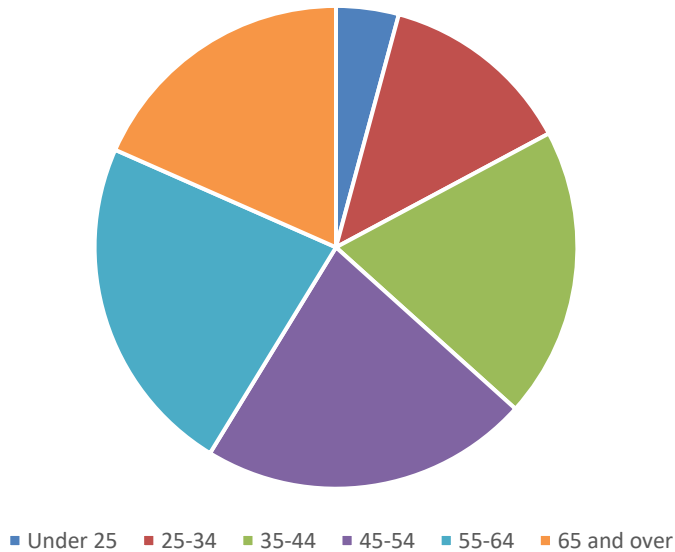
	Female	Male
Average Age of People Reporting Self-Employment Income from Any Job	47	48

Source: Census Bureau Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic (March) Supplement (2024)

Female Business Owners by Age

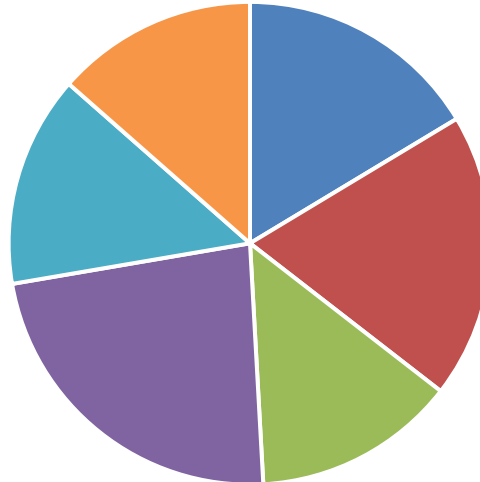


Male Business Owners by Age



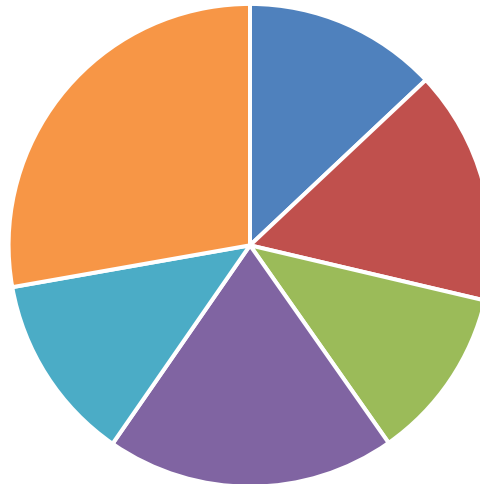
Source: 2020 Census Bureau Custom Tables for NWBC (from ABS and NES-D data) - Total Number of Owners by Owner Age and Sex

Age of Business - Majority Female-Owned



■ Less than 2 years ■ 2-3 years ■ 4-5 years ■ 6-10 years ■ 11-15 years ■ 16 or more years

Age of Business - Majority Male-Owned



■ Less than 2 years ■ 2-3 years ■ 4-5 years ■ 6-10 years ■ 11-15 years ■ 16 or more years

Source: 2020 Census Custom Tables for NWBC (from ABS and NES-D data) - Total Number of Firms by Firm Age and Owner Sex

Business Owners' Tenure by Gender				
Data Year	Share of all women-owned businesses recently acquired	Share of all women-owned businesses with long-tenured ownership	Share of all male-owned businesses recently acquired	Share of all male-owned businesses with long-tenured ownership
2020	35.6% (last 8 years)	19.1% (20+ years)	31.3% (last 8 years)	23.7% (20+ years)
2021	45.5% (last 11 years)	18.5% (21+ years)	40.6% (last 11 years)	22.8% (21+ years)
2022	48.1% (last 12 years)	16.8% (22+ years)	43.2% (last 12 years)	20.9% (22+ years)

2020, 2021, and 2022 Census Bureau Annual Business Survey Owner Characteristics of Respondent Employer Firms, Tables ABS2000CSCBO, ABS2100CSCBO, ABS2200CSCBO

3. **Women-owned businesses are more likely to be a side hustle than male-owned enterprises.**

	Women-Owned Businesses	Male-Owned Businesses
Business is Owner's Primary Source of Income	68%	73.3%
Business is Not Owner's Primary Source of Income	32%	26.7%

2021 Census Bureau Annual Business Survey Owner Characteristics of Respondent Employer Firms, Table AB2100CSCBO

4. **Women-owned businesses are undercapitalized.**

Share of Firms Seeking New Credit That Were Denied All Financing

Years in Business	Women-Owned Businesses	Male-Owned Businesses
Less than 2	21.4%	18%
2-3	21.4%	16.8%
4-5	Not Available	14.3%
6-10	17.4%	11.3%
11-15	17.2%	10.7%
More than 16	13.6%	8.6%

2022 Census Bureau Annual Business Survey Module Characteristics of Businesses, Table AB2200MCB03

5. **Women-owned businesses are more likely to grow slowly, or not at all, because lack of access to affordable child and family care hinders their progress.**

In a 2024 survey, 62% of women entrepreneurs with young children agreed that a lack of adequate childcare negatively impacted their ability to run their businesses. The most likely entrepreneurs to express this sentiment were those with mature businesses that earned more than \$1,000,000 in the most recent year, and/or that demanded at least 30 hours of work per week.

Source: United WE, [Care for the Economy](#): Women Entrepreneurs' Experiences with Childcare, June 4, 2024.

Impact of Childcare Needs and Deficit on Business Activities	Women Owners	Male Owners
Experienced substantial time away from running business	53%	50%
Lost out on business opportunities	43%	31%
Had to hire help to manage business and family responsibilities	29%	23%

Source: [Small Business Majority Survey: "Small Businesses Support Policy Solutions to Address Our Nation's Childcare Challenges, April 4, 2024](#) (gender-disaggregated data supplied by authors)

6. **Women-owned businesses are concentrated in service and discrete retail sectors that tend to have lower barriers to entry, lower profits, and slower growth; and that fail to qualify for tax credits and other public benefits for small firms.**

NAICS Codes with Highest Shares of SAM-registered Firms Small and Women-Owned, 2019-20

Code and Industry	WOSB share of SAM registrations	Average hourly wages (average for all private nonfarm employees = \$33.36)	Sector profitability (average net income for all tax return-filing businesses = \$327,602)
8121 – Personal Care Services: Barber shops, Beauty salons, Nail salons, Diet and weight reducing centers	54.6	\$25.09	Personal and laundry services = \$22,790
6244 – Child Day Care Services	50.7	\$21.06	Personal and laundry services = \$22,790
6241 – Individual and Family Services: Child and youth services, Services for the elderly and people with disabilities	48.9	\$23.05	Personal and laundry services = \$22,790

4531 – Florists	47	\$22.45	Miscellaneous store retailers = \$58,386
8132 – Grantmaking and Giving Services: Grantmaking foundations, Voluntary health organizations	46.7	\$52.66	Religious, grantmaking, civic, professional, and similar organizations = \$3,100
7115 – Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers	45.3	\$39.80	Other arts, entertainment, and recreation = \$47,683
6111 – Elementary and Secondary Schools	43.6	*	Educational services = \$53,841
5418 – Advertising, Public Relations, and Related Services: Media buying agencies, Media representatives, Outdoor advertising, Direct mail advertising, Advertising material distribution services	42.9	\$46.92	Professional, scientific, and technical services = \$54,901
7114 – Agents and Managers for Artists, Athletes, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures	42.4	\$39.14	Other arts, entertainment, and recreation = \$47,683
8134 – Civic and Social Organizations	42	\$26.07	Religious, grantmaking, civic, professional, and similar organizations = \$3,100
5412 – Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services – Offices of CPAs	41.7	\$41.85	Professional, scientific, and technical services = \$54,901
7113 – Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events	41.7	\$39.14	Other arts, entertainment, and recreation = \$47,683
6232 – Residential Intellectual and Developmental Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Facilities	41.5	\$25.27	Hospitals, nursing, and residential care facilities = \$265,171

5614 – Business Support Services: Document preparation services, Telephone answering services, Telemarketing bureaus and other contact centers, Private mail centers, Collection agencies, Credit bureaus, Repossession services, Court reporting and stenotype services	40.9	\$30.14	Administrative and support services = \$67,216
6117 – Educational Support Services	40.5	*	Educational services = \$53,841
6233 – Continuing Care Retirement Communities and Assisted Living Facilities for the Elderly	39.6	\$24.11	Hospitals, nursing, and residential care facilities = \$265,171
5613 – Employment Services: Employment placement agencies, Executive search agencies, Temporary help services, Professional employer organizations	39.6	\$26.56	Administrative and support services = \$67,216
3118 – Bakeries and Tortilla Manufacturing: Retail bakeries, Commercial bakeries, Frozen cakes, pies, and other pastries manufacturing, Cookie and cracker manufacturing, Dry pasta, dough, and flour mixes manufacturing, Tortilla manufacturing	39.4	\$25.32	Food manufacturing = \$2,088,940
4481 – Clothing Stores	39	\$24.30	Clothing and clothing accessories stores = \$245,628
6239 – Other Residential Care Facilities	38.7	\$25.05	Hospitals, nursing, and residential care facilities = \$265,171

* - Hourly wage data unavailable for businesses in educational services categories.

Sources: SAM data from tables prepared as background for SBA's [2020 disparity study](#) of WOSB and EDWOSB participation in federal contracting; Hourly Pay data compiled at [NAICSList.com](#) based on Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics sources (April 2023); Revenue data from Internal Revenue Service [SOL Tax Stats](#) – Returns of active corporations – Table 6 (Classified by Major Industry, 2013).