



# Home Improvements

## That Pay Off

It's no secret that certain rooms and features of your home have more sales appeal to prospective buyers. In especially competitive markets, a remodeled kitchen, modernized bathroom, energy-efficient windows or new floors can help a home stand out. If you plan to sell your home in the next five years, consider these remodels to attract potential buyers.

**A kitchen upgrade** may recoup 60 to 120 percent of your costs; just be sure the updated design complements the style of the rest of your home.<sup>1</sup> The kitchen is often the room that helps sell a home, avoid investing in high-end appliances and features. Paint the walls white or another light, neutral color to brighten the room. If you upgrade the appliances if necessary.

**A bathroom addition** may recoup 80 to 130 percent of your costs, especially if you only have one bathroom.<sup>1</sup> Many buyers prefer homes with at least two bathrooms. If your home is a few decades old, adding a half or full bathroom may make it more attractive to buyers. If you're wondering where to fit a new bathroom, consider underutilized spaces in your home, such as closets, extra rooms, etc.

**A reinvented space**, such as a finished basement, converted attic or small apartment over your garage, used to generate income may recoup 50 to 83 percent of your costs.<sup>1</sup> However, think about how potential buyers will use the space before you change the footprint of the room or invest money in the renovation.

**Add a deck.** People enjoy spending time outside and entertaining family and friends in the summer. Adding a deck may help you recoup 65 to 90 percent of your costs.<sup>1</sup> Keep in mind, this figure varies by the size of the deck, the materials used and other customized features.

**Install energy-efficient windows** and you may recoup 60 to 90 percent of your costs.<sup>1</sup> Many homebuyers, especially younger buyers, look for energy-efficient features in a home. If your windows are single-paned, upgrade to modern models that will help you save money and energy.

**Make small updates around the house** such as: fixing leaks, replacing rotten wood, repainting the interior and exterior and addressing mold and maintenance issues. The better condition your home is in, the more you may be able to sell it for.





# Planning to Remodel Before You Sell?

Whether or not your home renovation will pay off depends on many variables, including where you live and how competitive your market is. However, these timeless tips and improvements will help you put your home in its best light.

**Stick to basics.** While you may find professional-grade appliances useful, or prefer a bathroom that creates a relaxing spa experience, a potential buyer may not. Avoid designer touches that may only appeal to a limited group of buyers. If you update your kitchen or bathroom, keep it modest and stick to appliances and fixtures with clean lines in neutral colors.

- Add a backsplash in the kitchen. Listings that mentioned subway tile sold for **6.9%** more than the sales price.<sup>2</sup> Bonus: you can even do it yourself.
- Update your cabinets. Homebuyers love Shaker cabinets—listings that mentioned them sold for **9.6%** more than the list price.<sup>2</sup> If you have Shaker cabinets, refinish or paint/stain them so they look their best. If you'd like to get new cabinets, consider the timeless style of Shaker cabinets for when you sell.<sup>2</sup>
- Install granite countertops. Listings that mention this coveted feature sold for **4.1%** more than the list price. However, investigate to make sure the style fits with your neighborhood before making the upgrade. Granite countertops in an area where the average sales price of a home is lower may not have the same return on your investment.

**Upgrade or replace the front door.** Your front door is one of the first things potential buyers see. If the door is in need of an upgrade, replace it with a door that fits the style of the home. If your door is in good shape, paint or stain it to make it look like new.

**Update your fireplace.** Nothing makes a space cozier than a fireplace. According to multiple surveys, gas- and wood-burning fireplaces can have a big impact on a home's value. In one survey of agents, **54%** stated gas-burning fireplaces could increase a home's value the most. Another survey reported a majority of buyers prefer wood-burning fireplaces.

**Boost curb appeal.** Your landscaping gives potential buyers insight into the state of the inside of your home. Leave a great impression by mowing regularly, seeding dead patches, trimming and maintaining shrubs and flowerbeds and removing weeds. For maximum impact, plant flowers that bloom at different times for year-round color.

Sources: 1. Money Crashers  
2. US News, May 2016



## These Improvements Enhance Your Comfort and May Attract Buyers

New trends in home technology not only make your home 'smarter' and more comfortable, they may also attract potential buyers if you plan to sell.

**A water filtration system** purifies your tap water so you don't have to rely on a bulky filtering pitcher or purchase bottled water. Not only is it useful now, it may pay off when you sell.

**A programmable thermostat** keeps your home at a comfortable temperature and may help you save money on your heating and cooling bill long-term. Potential buyers may also see it as an additional perk.

**A smart doorbell** has a camera that allows you to see and speak to people at the door without having to open it. It's not only more convenient, it's also a safety feature. Additionally, more than 80 percent of sellers replace the doorbell when they list because it doesn't work anymore.<sup>2</sup>

