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Homes By Ursula



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The Best Value in Remodeling Updates

By Jill Moore



Every homeowner wants to make sure that remodeling projects help increase the value of the home. There are a few things you can do to make sure that your remodeling dollars are being put to the best use.

Focus on the Kitchen

First, work on updating your kitchen. The kitchen is one of the main focus areas of a home, so adding a new floor, new counters, and even light fixtures will improve the overall tone of your

home. Outdated appliances also tend to give a home a drab appearance, so if possible, it is a wise idea to consider purchasing newer appliances.

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Add a Bathroom

Adding a bathroom will also increase the value of your home. Low maintenance bathroom flooring such as dark or marbled tile, spacious counters, and upgraded shower surfaces are all great options. If you have the space, you might want to consider installing an extra sink and mirror for a special "his and hers" touch.

Create Outdoor Living Space

Another project that will add to the value of your home is the addition of a deck. Anything that enhances outdoor living, like a deck or patio, usually causes the value of a house to increase. If your home already has an existing deck, but it could use some help, a few repairs, along with a little sanding, cleaning and staining can make a big difference.

Other High Value Improvements

Fireplaces always add value to a home, so if you don't have a fireplace, you might want to think about adding one in your living room area. Also, adding a large closet in the master bedroom, or enlarging the one that is already there, is a great way to spend your remodeling dollars. It might be wise to make a list of all your desires, and then prioritize, based on the improvements that will best add to the value of your home.



Tips for Cleaning Carpet

By J. A. Young

Keep it Clean - Vacuuming thoroughly on a regular basis is the simplest way to extend the life of the carpet and keep it looking like new. When vacuuming, it is important to get as deep into the pile as possible, so be sure to adjust the vacuum for each type of carpet in the home. To loosen embedded dirt, it is a good idea to vacuum in different directions on the carpet.

Keep the Dirt Outside - A simple step like placing welcome mats outside every entrance to the home can do a great deal to keep the carpets looking clean and fresh. When placing these mats, be sure to place one at the entrance to the garage as well. Lots of dirt and grease can be tracked in from the garage, and these stains can be among the most difficult to remove.



Prevent Stains - Simply keeping on top of spills and other mishaps can go a long way toward keeping carpets looking like new. Cleaning up spills and other messes before they have a chance to become stains can extend the time between professional cleanings and extend the life of the carpet.

It is a good idea to keep carpet-cleaning products on hand. Pet owners should get specific products for cleaning pet stains. If a commercial cleaning solution is not available, a simple solution of vinegar and water makes a surprisingly effective substitute.

Deep Cleaning - It is important to occasionally give all the carpets in your home a thorough deep cleaning to remove all the embedded particles of dirt that normal vacuuming can miss. Homeowners can choose to

have their carpets cleaned professionally, or they can rent or buy steam cleaning or dry cleaning equipment and do the job themselves.

Make Small Rooms Feel Larger

By Mary Ward

Creating the illusion of more space can be a challenge but with a little strategic decorating you really can makeover your small room to make it feel larger.

The Basics - Remember that continuous lines, solid colors and light create a feeling of distance and openness, while dark colors, clutter and bright patterns close in and bring about a busy feel.

A Focal Point - Begin your decorating project by standing at the entrance of the room you



would like to change. Look to the farthest point and create a focal point there—something to draw attention across the distance of the room. Make this the most attractive part of the room.

Clutter - Clutter disrupts continuity and makes a room feel busy. Storage space is always limited in small rooms but closet organizers and shelves are good for housing those items that end up lying around. Labeled tote boxes stack neatly in closets or under beds.

Floors, Walls, and Ceiling - To make the most of a small room, choose flooring or carpeting that is a solid, neutral color. Avoid throw

rugs because they break up the uniformity of a room and cause it to feel smaller. Floors and walls should be the same color and clutter-free to create a feeling of openness. A white ceiling will make a room feel more spacious.

Lighting - Light creates openness and sets a cheerful mood. Open up windows to an outdoor view and allow in more light. Add extra lighting in any dark corners.

Furniture - Choose a few small, delicate pieces of furniture in light, textured, solid colored coverings. Look for soothing tones like creams, yellows, or light blues and greens. Create uniformity by going monochromatic. Do not overcrowd a small room.

Window Treatments - Light, sheer curtains don't obstruct the view to the outdoors and they allow in more light. Ceiling to floor curtains create the illusion of depth in a room.

Accessories - This is where you can bring color into your neutral décor. Make use of colorful throw pillows and a few knick-knacks. Strategically placed hanging plants will extend ceilings and create a sense of the outdoors. Elegant mirrors are great for creating depth and scenic wall murals provide the feeling of nature with its wide-open spaces.

The Right Edging for Your Landscape

By Susan M. Keenan

Although a small detail like edging may seem insignificant in the scope of a large landscaping project, it will have a profound impact on the look and feel of the finished project. Edging also helps to reduce erosion and keep weeds at bay.

There are many choices when it comes to edging the landscape, and no one choice will be right for every homeowner. One way to get some ideas is to simply drive around your neighborhood and take note of the houses whose landscaping you admire. Look closely at the type of edging they use and make plans to incorporate the same elements into your own edging project.



Edging Options

There are a number of edging materials available, including natural choices like stone, metal, brick and cement, as

well as a number of manmade elements such as plastic and composite materials.

Stone - Because of its variety of colors, shapes and sizes, low cost and ready availability, stone remains one of the most popular materials for edging the landscape.

Wood - It is important to choose weather treated wood that is suitable for use as edging materials, such as cedar, redwood and cypress. Anything from large railroad ties to smaller pieces of wood and timber can be used for edging, and a number of different styles of wood can be used throughout the landscape.

Shrubs & Flowers - You may want to consider edging your landscape with shrubs or flowers. There are many beautiful plants that are very well suited to acting as edging for your landscape.

Metal - In addition to being long lasting and durable, many forms of metal edging materials can be easily molded, bent and shaped, making it an excellent choice for odd shaped areas.



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Rent Tools For Home Repairs



(ARA) - It's time to get busy on your summer home repair or improvement projects. The lawn needs aerating, the front walk needs pressure washing, the gutters need cleaning, those cracked tiles in the foyer need replacing and the list goes on.

Your first thought may be to run out to the store and buy the tools

and supplies you'll need to get the various jobs done; but why spend thousands of dollars on tools you'll only use once or twice a year? Rent them instead.

Not only will renting tools save you money, a visit to your local rental store will give you access to home improvement experts who can make recommendations that will help you get the job done right.

To find the rental store nearest you, log on to www.RentalHQ.com.