



Making Changes with Resale in Mind

In spring when the plum trees are in bloom, many of us get the urge to throw everything out and redo our spaces. Such spring urges seem very primal and universal, but before you make an appointment with a contractor, we have some advice. Whether you are planning to sell a property now, or in the distant future, it pays to consider resale before undertaking home improvement projects.

In the current economy, smaller, lower cost, maintenance-related projects have the best cost-to-value ratio (National Remodeling, 2010). Most likely, this is the result of steady increases in construction costs, along with a decrease in home values over the same period.

If you are planning to stay many years in your home, big projects such as kitchen and bath remodels and room additions can add unquantifiable enjoyment to living in your home. If you are moving within the next couple of years, however, you may want to consider simpler upgrades to enhance your current space without spending too much.

Here are some ideas for relatively smaller fixes that have immediate return at resale:

A fresh paint job in neutral or fashionable colors is the most cost-effective improvement you can make. If you have a lot of wood paneling, painting over it will lighten your rooms. However, with beautiful original wood paneling, it's usually better not to paint the wood. In general, original details in homes built in the 1930s and before are in demand, and those which have been lovingly restored by their owners have the greatest appeal.



Buyers also want hardwood floors, so if you already have them underneath carpeting, it pays to remove the carpet and have the hardwood floors refinished. Otherwise, replace worn carpet with an appropriate carpet.

Many tile bathrooms are attractive, but the tiles may need repair or re-caulking. Working with what's in good condition or repairable, but replacing little things like knobs, mirrors and curtains can also refresh a tired bathroom.

A complete kitchen remodel before moving is usually inadvisable, but you can update the look of a kitchen without starting from scratch. Examine knobs, light fixtures, appliances, and flooring with a critical eye. Could the cabinets be painted? Could furniture be added or subtracted for a better use of space?

Landscaping can add a lot of value to a home for a modest investment, and if you have the luxury of time, your results will be more impressive. Well-placed flowering trees, planting for privacy, and creating outdoor spaces like patios can create curb appeal, vistas from within the home, and expand your living area.



A bit more expensive but still good value: window replacements can improve curb appeal and energy efficiency; roof replacements take the worry out of immediate cost outlays for a new buyer.

We would be happy to walk through your home with you to help you decide where your energies would best be spent from a resale standpoint. We can also recommend trades people to help you. It's amazing the difference these small changes can make in the beauty of a home and thus your enjoyment on a daily basis, as well as the higher price it can fetch on the market.

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