



Hints For Homeowners

How To Improve Your Home And Its 'Joy Score'

(NAPSA)—The next time you're thinking about sprucing up your digs, consider these projects, which the National Association of Realtors' (NAR) recent "Remodeling Impact Report" says can bring the greatest cost recovery or deliver the most happiness based on a "joy score."

Think Like A Buyer

Even if you don't plan to sell your home in the near future, envision yourself as a potential buyer walking into your house for the first time. Which imperfections would catch someone's eye immediately yet are reasonable to fix? A few projects that made owners happiest were adding a bathroom, new fiber-cement siding and a complete kitchen renovation.

There are several affordable renovations that recover most of the costs when it's time to sell your home. Of the projects that had the greatest cost recovery, many, based on average costs, were \$2,500 or less. These included insulation upgrades (95 percent cost recovery on \$2,100), a new garage door (87 percent on \$2,300) and refinishing hardwood flooring (100 percent cost recovery on \$2,500).

Look Above

Depending on your home's age, your roof has likely felt the brunt of Mother Nature. Over time, torrential downpours, fierce winds and even the cold can cause shingles to peel back, buckle and even fall off. This leaves your home susceptible to leaks and possibly mildew or mold.

Although costly (\$7,600 on



The right home improvements can have a meaningful effect on your home's value, whether you are looking to stay or sell.

average), a new roof rated the highest in both cost recovery (105 percent) and happiness. When selling, a recently fixed or replaced roof also puts potential buyers at ease.

Give Your Kitchen A Fresh Look

While full kitchen renovations can cost north of \$50,000, smaller projects such as updating worn-out cabinet surfaces, installing touch-activated faucets and even a new backsplash are budget friendly and likely gratifying to you or a potential buyer.

Need proof? Fifty-seven percent of surveyed Realtors reported they've suggested sellers complete a kitchen upgrade before attempting to sell. As for owners, 82 percent said they have a greater desire to be home since completing an upgrade.

Get Help

Realtors know which remodeling projects bring the biggest bang for the buck. If you're looking to upgrade before selling and need advice, find a Realtor nearby at www.realtor.com/realestateagents.