

Sage Home Improvement Advice

Your house is not only your home, but also your biggest investment – and its value can be increased through improvements. While the natural tendency is to think in terms of major renovations, our advice is to *tackle one modest home improvement project every year*. This will keep your home feeling updated and fresh and help you fall in love with your home all over again.

While most people think “kitchen remodel” when discussing home improvements, the reality is that updates come in all shapes and sizes, and most add value and enhance your enjoyment.

- One of the most affordable ways to dramatically update the look of a home is with **fresh paint**. Exterior paint can change the curb appeal as well as protect the siding against the elements. Interior paint is a great way to modernize and freshen up a room. Painting tips:
 1. Take down light fixtures, plug & switch plates before painting; it helps mitigate future headaches.
 2. Good prep work is as important and time consuming as the painting itself. Don't take shortcuts!
 3. Choose your paint sheen and colors wisely. Some paint sheens are easier to clean than others (e.g. satin or egg shell vs. flat). Stale, faded or outdated colors speak volumes and look tired.
- **New light fixtures** can quickly change the feel of a room. Replace old can lights with flush LED lights for a modern look. Ceiling and wall mounted fixtures come in a variety of styles, finishes and bulb temperatures (colors). It is amazing how changing one light fixture can impact an entire room.
- Updating old **electrical outlets** can add convenience as well as improve safety. Outlets with built-in USB plugs free up valuable plug space in strategic locations. One innovative client even created a dedicated “devices” shelf complete with power for each family member, making it easy to confirm none of the kids’ devices were absent before bed!
- **Hinges and knobs** can quickly date a room, especially if they have a “vintage” (dated!) look. Changing from brass to brushed nickel, oil rubbed bronze or chrome can make a surprising difference. A word to the wise though – hinges can be tricky. Be sure your cabinet hinge replacements are an *exact* match or this project becomes much more difficult and costly.
- King among improvements, **kitchen or bathroom** remodels generally rank at the top in terms of cost and value added, not to mention your personal enjoyment. Remodeling tips:
 1. Always get permits. They validate the work is done right, keep the city/county happy, plus future home buyers like permits.
 2. Be prepared to update the electrical feeding to the kitchen or bathroom.
 3. New cabinets may necessitate new flooring. New cabinets not in the budget? Refacing existing cabinets can give an older kitchen a new look, especially when coupled with new counter tops.
 4. Always have *all* new/replacement pieces on hand before demo begins to save time and money!

One last tip – Pick a look/style for your home and stick with it. A modern style home with Mediterranean floor tiles and paint colors just feels out of place. A cohesive look adds value and helps guide your update choices.

Best Regards,



Janie and John Barman

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“Oh, by the way, we are never too busy for your referrals.”