Home Improvements

that pay you back

Factors to Consider

TIME and MONEY

TIME: How long will you live in this house?

My house is fine; I'll probably be here for a while	I'm actively getting the house ready for sale now

MONEY: WHAT'S YOUR HOME IMPROVEMENT BUDGET?

$XXX and I'd like to do most of the work myself

$XXXX and I'll have professionals do most or all of the work

Tip #1: Create Space

Low Budget

When you can't add more space, use space creatively

- Vertical space
- The backs of doors
- See our presentation on Using Space Creatively

Higher Budget

- Adding "functional space" is more valuable than aesthetic additions (bathrooms return 55% of cost; decks return 67%-77% of cost)
- Don't be the biggest house on the block.

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Vertical Space











The backs of doors

Tip #2: Prune, Limb & Landscape

Low Budget

- Tidy up! Trim overgrown trees; prune shrubs.
- Plant trees strategically to make use of shade to cool your A/C and house
- See our presentation on Landscaping to Save $$

Higher Budget

- Hire a professional landscape designer
- Many will sell you a plan, which you can implement over time

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A landscape upgrade from **average** *to* **excellent** *can increase a home's value by 10% to 12%*

Energy Saver 101: Everything You Need to Know About

LANDSCAPING

Landscaping doesn't only add beauty to your home, but it can also improve your home's comfort and **lower your energy bills.**

On average, a well-designed landscape saves enough energy to pay for itself in less than **8 YEARS.**



Lower maintenance



Reduce your water use

allowing you to better deal with water restrictions!



Cut your heating and cooling costs



Protect your home from cold winter wind and hot summer sun



Help lower noise and air pollution

ENERGY.GOV


Photo Courtesy of Corey Fuehrer



Tip #3: Lights & Light

Low Budget

- "Light" comes from fixtures and from windows—don't overlook updating window treatments
- Updating recessed lights is easy

Higher Budget

- Hire an electrician to add wiring where there is none or to upgrade existing electrical service

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Before and After





"Before and After: Let in the Light"
kitchens.com

Before and After





"Interior Painting Before and After Pictures"
portlandhousepainting.com

Before and After





"5 Minute Lighting Upgrade" prettyhandygirl.com

Tip #4: Care & Maintenance

Low Budget

- Don't overlook routine maintenance: roof, gutters, downspouts, driveways, sidewalks, steps; interior systems
- Learn how to do it yourself

Higher Budget

- Don't overlook routine maintenance: roof, gutters, downspouts, driveways, sidewalks, steps; interior systems
- Establish relationships with reputable professionals.

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Tip #5: Add Energy Efficiency

- Tax Credits are Available for many energy saving improvements
- Energy efficient LED lights use much less electricity and will last indefinitely
- Good whether you are staying in your house (ongoing energy savings and increased comfort) OR getting ready to sell it

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Tax Credits for Energy Efficient Home Improvements

10% of cost up to $500 for many home improvements that will also save you money and increase your comfort:

- Biomass Stoves
- Air Source Heat Pumps
- Central Air Conditioning
- Gas, Propane or Oil Hot Water Boiler
- Gas, Propane or Oil Furnaces and Fans
- Insulation
- Roofs
- Water Heaters (non-solar)
- Windows, Doors & Skylights

30% of cost with no upper limit:

- Geothermal Heat Pumps
- Small Wind Turbines (residential)
- Solar Energy Systems
- Fuel Cells



"Federal Income Tax Credits for Energy Efficiency" energystar.gov

The Result of Adding Insulation

February, 2015



February, 2016





Tip #6: The Front Door

Low Budget

- Installing a steel front-entry door recoups more than 85% of the cost
- Make sure doorbell works

Higher Budget

- Refinish an historical door, or hire a professional.
- Lead-safe practices!

"Brokers Tell All: 10 Ways to Boost House Value" This Old House

Paint, Lights, Rug

Before



After



"How to Transform Your Front Door" countryliving.com



"How to Refinish an Entry Door" oldhouseonline.com

Tip #7: Don't Ignore the Floor

94% of Realtors surveyed said spending $600-$900 to fix up your floors can be worth $2000 when you sell.

- Pull up old carpet
- Cover or replace outdated floors (linoleum, pitted vinyl), especially if you are planning to sell
- Fix squeaks when you can get to them
- Replace broken tiles and patch damaged floor boards
- Hardwood floors and engineered hardwood floors hold their value the best

"Brokers Tell All: 10 Ways to Boost House Value" This Old House

Tip #8: Upgrade Kitchens & Baths

Low Budget

- Stick with original layout
- Reuse everything you can
- Replacing appliances can save you money
- New paint = New look
- Minor remodels can return over 90% of your investment

Higher Budget

- Change your kitchen layout to reflect your workflow
- Major remodels pay back 76% of cost

"Brokers Tell All: 10 Ways to Boost House Value" This Old House.com
"The 10 Commandments of Kitchen Renovation" The Kitchn.com
"Five Additions that Add Value" homeguides.sfgate.com

Midrange Minor Kitchen Remodel

In a functional but dated 200-square-foot kitchen with 30 linear feet of cabinetry and countertops,

- Leave cabinet boxes in place but replace fronts with new raised-panel wood doors and drawers, including new hardware
- Replace wall oven and cooktop with new energy-efficient models
- Replace laminate countertops
- Install midpriced sink and faucet
- Repaint trim, add wall covering, and remove and replace resilient flooring

- 2016 Cost: $20,122 Value: $16,716 83.1% return

"Cost vs. Value Project: Minor Kitchen Remodel"
http://www.remodeling.hw.net/cost-vs-value/minor-kitchen-remodel

Tip #9: Decor

Low Budget

- Paint, paint, paint
- Remove dated wallpaper
- Remove "popcorn" ceilings
- Use neutral colors if you plan to sell
- New pillows, bed clothes, curtains

Higher Budget

- Decorative moldings: crown and/or chair rail
- Quality ceiling fans
- Outdoor patio or deck (can recover 30-60% of an average patio)
- Remove paneling

"Brokers Tell All: 10 Ways to Boost House Value" This Old House

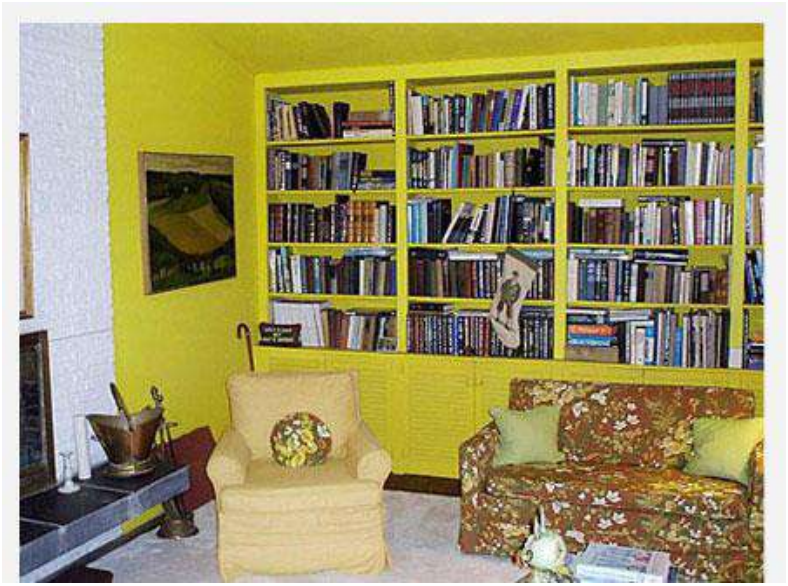
Before and After





"Interior Painting Before and After Pictures"
portlandhousepainting.com

Before and After





"Living Room Makeovers: Before and After"
decoratingfiles.com

Tip #10: Remove the Question Marks

Fix the quirks!

- The side door that you have to open by giving it a shoulder.
- The front mail slot that you've taped over so the mailman won't use it
- The uneven sidewalk, the wobbly porch railing

If you're staying in your home, it'll work better.

If you're selling your home, you'll take away potential buyer's objections.

"Brokers Tell All: 10 Ways to Boost House Value" This Old House

Sources Used

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