



10 TOTALLY DOABLE WAYS

SELLERS CAN RAISE RESALE VALUE

BY MERILEE KERN

As the market slowly cools off, homeowners are more interested than ever in finding ways to make sure their properties resell for as much as possible. However, choosing between the many potential renovations makes moving forward with your home improvement and listing for sale overwhelming.

What type of renovations can increase home resale value... or generally add tremendous appeal that can tip the scales in your favor?

Below Jon Grishpul, Co-CEO of www.GreatBuildz.com—a free service that matches homeowners with reliable, pre-screened general contractors—suggests these 10 ways to renovate in intelligent, efficient ways that will help you get more money back as you put your home on the market.

#1: OUTDOOR UPGRADES

Curb appeal cannot be understated, and buyers like to have a group area to come home to. This includes the front yard, back yard, any patio space, and even the driveway. If any of these structures need serious renovation or repair, consider prioritizing this area to increase home value.

Driveways, in particular, can add a lot of value. This is particularly true if you have an unpaved driveway or can expand the driveway to be wider. These will not only add value, but they will also attract attention. Another addition that can make a huge difference is an outdoor living area, such as a deck or patio. Homeowners have found that they get nearly 100% back on this investment, so it can be a great way to enjoy the outdoors and then increase your resale value down the line.

When doing large landscaping and paving projects, however, keep in mind that you should not DIY these renovations unless you have experience with these projects. Hiring a professional to lead with these tasks will be more expensive, but the end results will be far more successful.

#2: OUTDOOR SHOWERS

Thanks to celebrities and popular architects, outdoor showers are having a moment this year as a major remodeling trend.

They're practical outdoor remodeling projects that serve multiple purposes and add unique designs to traditional neighborhoods. You could use your shower to rinse off after swimming in your pool or mowing your lawn. Wash your dog in your outdoor shower to minimize the inevitable indoor mess. They're also great additions to coastal rental homes for guests who frequently jump into the waves. If you're considering an outdoor shower, remember to select features like water-resistant tiles to make it last longer. It should also have complete privacy from any neighbors and drainage that directs water away from your home's foundation.

#3: BUILT-IN BOOKSHELVES

Wobbly bookshelves and temporary furniture are old news. People are looking forward to installing built-in bookshelves this year instead. They add value to any property and give it instant character — built-in shelves are more of a bold statement than standing shelves. They're also a fun opportunity to create a secret doorway or an entertainment cabinet — talk about a fun remodeling trend.

#4: FIREPLACE ADDITION

Many buyers are looking for homes that have charming and warm fireplaces in their homes, and they're not always a common feature. Depending on the layout of your home, it can cost just a few thousand dollars to do this renovation.

Even though the investment is small, the return that you might see when reselling is huge. Plus, it will help your home stand out from others that don't have comparable features. This is a definite must if comparable homes in your area all have fireplaces. Without one, you might miss out on great potential buyers.

#5: EXPANSIVE WINDOWS

Wider windows are popular for numerous reasons. They let more sunlight into your home, decreasing the need for lamps and more electricity. Big windows can also make rooms appear bigger. Your home will feel brand new with a slightly more expansive view of your backyard or neighborhood.

#6: TANKLESS WATER HEATERS

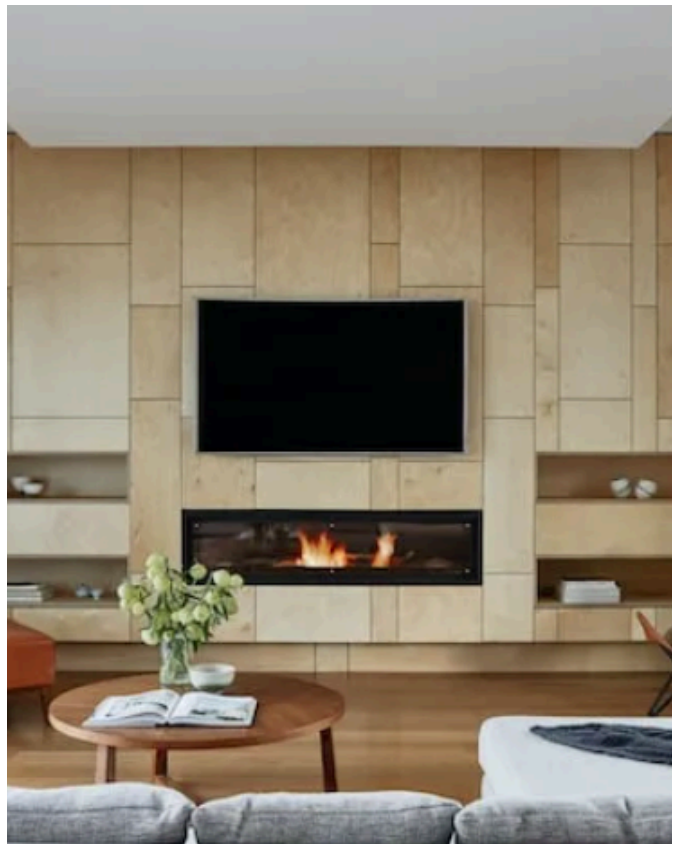
Instead of consuming electricity to continuously heat a large tank of water for small usages, tankless heaters warm water only when you need it. They're more cost-efficient for long-term use than water tanks because you'll use much less daily electricity.

#7: HIDDEN TV CENTERS

People don't want to get rid of their televisions, but sometimes it's nice to hide TVs away for more family time and a cleaner aesthetic. Building a built-in bookshelf that spans your living room wall or an alcove with hidden doors above your fireplace has great appeal. Whether you have a large flatscreen that prioritizes the environment or a vintage television, you can build an entertainment center that tucks it out of sight whenever you want to unplug.

#8: JETTED BATHTUB

Going to the spa is always a treat, but you might not schedule appointments as often as you'd like. That's one reason homeowners are installing jetted bathtubs in their bathrooms. You can relax in luxury without leaving your home once you remodel your bathroom to fit your preferred jetted model. The simple element will help relieve your daily stress if you love to soak in a bubble bath.





ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Merilee Kern, MBA is an internationally-regarded brand strategist and analyst who reports on noteworthy industry change makers, movers, shakers and innovators across all B2B and B2C categories. This includes field experts and thought leaders, brands, products, services, destinations and events. Merilee is Founder, Executive Editor and Producer of *"The Luxe List."* As a prolific business and consumer trends, lifestyle and leisure industry voice of authority and tastemaker, she keeps her finger on the pulse of the marketplace in search of new and innovative must-haves and exemplary experiences at all price points, from the affordable to the extreme—also delving into the minds behind the brands. Her work reaches multi-millions worldwide via broadcast TV (her own shows and copious others on which she appears) as well as a myriad of print and online publications. Some or all of the accommodations(s), experience(s), item(s) and/or service(s) detailed above may have been provided or arranged at no cost to accommodate if this is review editorial, but all opinions expressed are entirely those of Merilee Kern and have not been influenced in any way.

#9: WALK-IN CLOSETS

Bigger closets give you more room to store your belongings, but they're so much more than storage space. They also add luxury to any home and create new opportunities for personalization. Consider remodeling your closet this year to include features like cabinets, built-in lighting, display shelves, and seating. You'll add value to your home and make it feel like a mansion. Plus, it's always helpful to have extra room for storing your belongings.

#10: KITCHEN REFRESH

When buyers are browsing real estate listings, many are seeking stunning kitchens with amazing details. If your home doesn't have this yet, upgrading the kitchen is one of the best renovations that you can do. That being said, kitchen remodels can be incredibly expensive. Still, you should also remember that the return on investment can be huge. Some sellers that renovated their kitchen before selling found that their home resale value rose by more than \$80,000 after a kitchen remodel, and they even got multiple offers.

If comparable properties in your area have renovated kitchens, this will be a must if you want to increase your listing price. If properties do not have renovated kitchens, this might be a great time to stand out. To cut back on costs, consider only renovating part of the kitchen, especially if your kitchen is already partially updated.

You can spend less than \$20,000 on renovations if you only update one or two of the following:

- Cabinetry
- Appliances
- Countertops
- Flooring
- Lighting and fixtures

Of course, consider your budget when choosing between these enhancements. It's OK if you cannot take on a huge renovation project. Even small investments can double back the money you earn at resale, so think logically as you plan your next steps.

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