



Which Home Updates Are Worth It?

If you're eager to sell—or just want to make some changes to test reactions—now's the time to save yourself some grief by learning which upgrades increase your house's value in potential buyers' eyes and which leave them stone cold.

And while you're at it, never forget the first rule of upgrades, according to Remodeling magazine's Cost vs. Value Report for 2019: "Think like a real estate broker." Read on to see why that includes focusing heavily on curb appeal and first impressions.

WORTH IT: A NEW GARAGE DOOR

It ranked first on the magazine's list of projects, with a 97.5% return on investment thanks in part to its relatively low cost.

NOT WORTH IT: UPSCALE BATHROOM REMODELING

Want an easy way to save \$60,000 or so? Don't spend it on installing the whirlpool tub, heated towel bars, and stone countertops of your dreams. Why? Because they're your dreams. And as Remodeling magazine notes, "Because of the vast

differences in aesthetic tastes, one person's elegant new bath will be viewed by a range of other prospective buyers as 'tacky and outdated and in desperate need of a reset.'"

WORTH IT: A BIGGER RUG

At least some buyers will judge the size of a room based on the size of the rug. Going bigger is actually a trick some real estate moguls have been known to use. Since the living room is likely the first interior part of the house buyers will see—and, remember, first impressions matter—bet on them extrapolating from it to guesstimate the entire size of the house.

NOT WORTH IT: A MIDRANGE BACKYARD PATIO

It's in the backyard, right?—emphasis on "back." Which explains why it only garnered a 55.2% return on investment.

NOT WORTH IT: A MAJOR UPSCALE KITCHEN REMODEL

Another of those "differences in aesthetic tastes" issues. Better off to stick to repainting the walls or resurfacing cabinets, if need be.

WORTH IT: A NEW ROOF

In fact, given that it's such a prominent part of the house, you might call the roof the ultimate curb enhancer: If buyers like what they see, you're halfway home; if they don't, they may look for even more things to hate and certainly won't be quick to open their wallets. Or, as Remodeling magazine says about curb appeal: "The impact these impressions make is critical in setting the stage for what a buyer is willing to pay for a home." If your roof needs replacing, check out GAF (gaf.com), North America's largest roofing manufacturer.

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