

Top remodeling tips for maximizing return on investment

While Americans remodel for a variety of reasons, many look to increase the value of their homes. Here are the top tips for homeowners to maximize return on their remodeling dollars; by following these simple guidelines, homeowners can avoid expensive mistakes and ensure top value, whether selling now or in 10 years.

The National Association of Home Builders Remodelers suggests the following to increase return on investment:

- ❑ Keep up with the Joneses. When searching for project ideas, look at amenities of other homes in the neighborhood. Building an addition may not be a sound investment if yours is the first on the block, yet it would be very wise to add should all the neighbors have one. Kitchens and bathrooms still count. These rooms are consistently rated the best places to spend your remodeling dollars.
- ❑ However... Don't neglect the rest of the house. Money spent on a beautiful kitchen is wasted when other rooms have cracked drywall and 1970s shag carpeting. Make sure the entire home is updated to an acceptable level. A topical solution. One of the cheapest and easiest ways to add value is through a fresh coat of paint, breathing new life into a

room for just a little money and some elbow grease. Does this kitchen go with these bedrooms? If you're considering a major project, a design-build remodeling firm or architect should be consulted so the look and feel blends seamlessly into the rest of the home. Poorly matched additions can even decrease value.

- ❑ Nice, but not too nice. While you may want to have the best house on the block, the return diminishes if your home becomes the most expensive in the neighborhood. Square peg, round hole. When renovating or adding on, avoid too much customization of space so potential buyers can envision the home suiting their needs. A well-designed fourth bedroom to you could be an office, workout room or home theater for someone else. No curbing the appeal. The exterior is your home's first impression, so be certain that siding, paint, landscaping and any other outside areas look acceptable. There is no single project that guarantees a 100 percent return on investment. However, careful planning and professional work will ensure your remodeling dollars go farthest. To learn more about home remodeling, visit www.nahb.org/remodel.

ABOUT NAHB Remodelers: The NAHB Remodelers is America's home for professional Remodelers, representing the 14,000 remodeling industry members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). Founded in 1982, the Council provides information, education and designation programs to improve the business and construction expertise of its members and to enhance the professional image of the industry. Locally, the HBA Remodelers™ Council was formed in 1990 and assists in the planning and coordination of the Fall Home Show and the Industry Garage Sale. The charitable outlet for the council has been a program involving ramp projects where members coordinate the construction of two to three handicap-accessible ramps per year.