



SELLING THIS SUMMER?

6 UPGRADES TO SECURE A SPEEDY SALE.

When the weather warms up, so does the real estate market. Spring and summer are traditionally the seasons when both home buyers and sellers are most active across the country. If you'll be putting your home on the market this year, simple, cost-effective upgrades can help ensure a speedy sale at a good price.

"In the world of real estate, it's often necessary for sellers to spend a little on upgrades in order to achieve a satisfying home sale," says Bethany Richmond, communications director for the Carpet & Rug Institute. "Fortunately, some of the most impressive upgrades, such as new carpeting, are also affordable. Such upgrades ensure that you don't have to spend a lot to achieve a better selling price."

Here are six easy-to-do upgrades that are both cost-effective and high-impact:

1. Replace carpet

It's easy to see the impact of worn or dated carpeting. "If you don't like looking at it, buyers won't either," Richmond says. "Replacing old or damaged carpet delivers impressive appeal for a modest investment."

New carpet is one upgrade that has a high ratio of value to cost. It substantially increases perceived value for homebuyers without requiring home sellers to spend a bundle. "Even less expensive carpet styles will freshen the look of a room and prepare it for sale," Richmond notes. "You can get a lot more quality for just a little more money, she says, "and if you take advantage of spring carpet sales, installing new carpeting can cost even less."

2. Clean flooring

If your carpet is still in great shape, then simply having it professionally cleaned can make it look even better. A deep professional cleaning helps lift tough soils and provides a cleaner, fresher look to rooms. You can find an expert in your area by visiting www.carpet-rug.org. CRI experts can even provide insight into how to remove difficult stains.

Not only is carpet a good value, it's healthy, too. People with allergies or other sensitivities are installing carpet to improve indoor air quality. Recent studies support previous findings that carpet, when effectively cleaned, traps allergens and other particles, resulting in less dust, dander and airborne contaminants escaping into the air. To learn more about selecting and maintaining carpet, as well as how carpet is a good choice for people with allergies, visit the home page of the Carpet & Rug Institute at www.carpet-rug.org.

Don't forget to clean all other flooring, including hardwood, laminates and tile. Buyers will appreciate a sparkling clean appearance throughout the house.

3. Repaint in neutral shades

Fresh paint is another smart and cost-effective upgrade for sellers. Buyers expect it, yet many sellers hesitate to repaint. Perhaps they like the existing colors or balk at the cost of professional painting services. Yet repainting in neutral colors makes a room look fresher and brighter, and gives buyers a visual "blank slate" against which to imagine their own decor. Do the work yourself and you can reduce the cost of repainting even further.

4. Update or upgrade lighting

You may find that disco-ball style globe light charming in your kitchen, but the average buyer doesn't want dated or unusual lighting. Replacing dated or worn fixtures, especially in bathrooms and kitchens, is a cost-effective way to give a room a more up-to-date, contemporary look. If you already have newer fixtures, consider replacing incandescent bulbs with high-efficiency options such as CFLs or LEDs. Although they're a bit more expensive to purchase, these bulbs last years longer – a selling point for buyers who will reap the value of not having to replace bulbs any time in the near future.

5. Install new faucets

A high-end faucet can completely change the look and usability of a kitchen or bathroom. In terms of cost versus value, an upgraded faucet, such as pull-out or even touch-free styles, can dramatically increase perceived value for a relatively modest investment. An upgraded faucet is a thoughtful touch that will set your home apart in buyers' minds.

6. Replace hardware throughout the home

You may have already thought of upgrading kitchen cabinet knobs and drawer pulls, but have you also upgraded hardware in your bathroom or on the front door? These seemingly small items have a major impact on the overall visual effect of a home. In desirable rooms such as kitchens and baths, designer hardware can elevate the entire look of the room. And upgraded door hardware will ensure buyers have a positive first impression from the moment they enter your home.

Visit carpet-rug.org and criblog.org to learn more

