



6 Worth-the-Price Fix-Ups

Simple and affordable do-it-yourself projects can greatly increase a home's resale value, according to HomeGain's annual home improvement and staging survey.



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The marketing company surveyed nearly 600 real estate professionals to discover which DIY home improvement projects give sellers the biggest return for their buck. Here are six projects under \$1,000 (amounts are estimated) that made the list.

1. Cleaning and decluttering. Remove any personal items, unclutter countertops, organize closets and shelves, and make the home sparkling clean.

\$290 Cost

\$1,990 Return

2. Brightening. Clean all windows inside and out, replace old curtains, update lighting fixtures, and remove anything that blocks light from the windows.

\$375 Cost

\$1,550 Return

3. Smart staging. Rearrange furniture, bring in new accessories and furnishings to enhance rooms, incorporate artwork, and play soft music in the background.

\$550 Cost

\$2,194 Return

4. Landscaping enhancements. **Punch** up the home's curb appeal in the front and back yards by adding bark mulch, bushes, and flowers and ensuring current plants and grass are well-cared for and manicured.

\$540 Cost

\$1,932 return

5. Repairing electrical or plumbing. Fix leaks under the sinks, remove any mildew stains, and ensure all plumbing is in good working condition. Update the home's electrical with new wiring for modern appliances, fix any lights or outlets that don't work, and replace old plug points with new safety fixtures.

\$535 Cost

\$1,505 Return

6. Replacing or shampooing dirty carpets. Steam-clean carpets, replace any worn carpets, and repair any floor creaks.

\$647 Cost

\$1,739 Return

Excerpted from HomeGain's 2011 Home Sale Maximizer Survey, www.homesalemaximizer.com.

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