

5 upgrades that buyers love (and one they absolutely HATE)

After spending countless hours touring various homes with buyers, seeing them ooh and ahhh over the things they love and cringing over the things they hate, we have firsthand knowledge of what people like and don't like.

In our experience getting premium prices for the houses we sell, we've noticed that some improvements can seriously pump up the price of a house—while others are a serious waste of money.

There is a reason that we get the most money possible for the houses that we sell: we prepare homes so they appeal to affluent

buyers' tastes and lifestyle aspirations.

How can we tell which upgrades are the *right* upgrades in the *right* style?

It's easy: Think like a buyer. Understand what the buyer wants and what they don't want.

Here is a list of five specific upgrades that buyers love (and one they hate).



1. High-End Kitchen Appliances

People want to see high-end appliances that have a *WOW!* factor. They love ranges, dishwashers and refrigerators with stainless steel surfaces. They love gas stoves with at least six burners. They want it to look commercial, with lots of dials, buttons and knobs, while still looking good in the house.

Brands to look for: SubZero, Wolf, and Viking.

One brand to avoid: Garland. Their commercial range looks too industrial for a residential house.

Money saving tip: If you don't have \$12,000 for a Viking range, you can get a GE Monogram for \$6,000.

2. Natural Stone Countertops

Buyers love countertops made from natural materials like limestone, granite, and marble. They are instantly turned off by artificial surfaces, such as quartz and silestone.



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3. Details that add character

Give the house a fresh look and feel with interesting lighting and all the little details that add character. For instance, a fabulous light fixture lifts the entire space. Update the faucets, cabinet knobs in kitchens and bathrooms.

Where to shop: Buyers love the relaxed contemporary feel of Pottery Barn and the warm nostalgia of Restoration Hardware.

4. Lighter and brighter floors

Bypass traditional darker stains in favor of lighter shades of oak, walnut and pecan, or matte flooring materials.

5. A finished and functional garage

Make the garage into more than a warehouse to park your car. Add a coated surface to your concrete garage floor; you can choose a coating that matches the rest of your house. Finish the garage with sheet rock and a coat of paint. Finally, add cabinetry and space saving organizers.

One thing that buyers HATE

People *hate* manufactured flooring.

We know. Every time a buyer visits an open house with manufactured flooring, they just hate it. They hate the fact that you can only refinish it two or three times, and it just doesn't look natural.

If a designer or contractor tries to talk you into installing manufactured flooring, claiming that "it works great", remember, it's a waste of money. It costs about the same as hardwood floors but it will hurt your chances of selling your home for a premium price.

Still not sure what upgrades to make?

After spending countless hours touring various homes with buyers, seeing them *ooh* and *ahhh* over the things they love and cringing over the things they hate, we have firsthand knowledge of what people like and don't like.

If you're wondering what improvements are really worth doing, call us for a free "Room-by-Room Review." We'll show you the most important things you can do to prepare for your move.



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