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Tips to make guest rooms more welcoming

by Metro News

Millions of celebrants welcome family and friends into their home as overnight guests each holiday season. Hosting loved ones during the holiday season is a selfless act that enables families to create the kind of lasting memories that make December such a special time of year.

As hosts prepare their homes for loved ones this holiday season, they can consider these tips to make guests rooms as welcoming as possible for friends and family.

 Check the bedding and replace, if necessary. It's easy to overlook the comfort of bedding in a guest room, particularly since hosts may never sleep in their own guest rooms. When furnishing a quest room, it's not unheard of to re-purpose an existing mattress from an owner's suite or another room and use for guest room bedding. Though that's acceptable, it's necessary to periodically inspect a guest room mattress to make sure it's still comfortable and supportive. If not, replace the mattress. A mattress topper, a new comforter and a new set of soft sheets also can make guest room bedding more comfortable.



- Clear out the clutter. Guest rooms can easily become depositories for old furniture and other items, which can create a cluttered and less than welcoming atmosphere in a space. Give each guest room a thorough once-over before guests arrive, removing pieces that might be creating a claustrophobic vibe. Keep in mind that guests will bring luggage, so a less cluttered space with ample room for their bags can make it easier to settle in.
- Take a cue from hotels. Hotels ensure guests have ample creature comforts at their fingertips. Holiday hosts can do the same when welcoming loved ones into their homes. Provide ample bed and bath linens. ensure the room has ample lighting so guests can read at bedtime and get dressed in plenty of light in the morning. A fold-able luggage rack is another nice touch that can keep guests from having to dig through their suitcases on the floor.
- Add an armchair where possible. A spacious guest

room allows hosts to provide some extra creature comforts. If the room allows, place a comfortable armchair and side table in the space so guests can read a book or catch up on the news on a tablet or smartphone. A comfortable, quiet and secluded place to sit provides guests a respite from the hustle and bustle of a home filled with holiday quests.

 Install window coverings, if necessary. A feeling of privacy is another important creature comfort quests will appreciate. Replace existing window treatments if they do not provide adequate privacy or if they do not keep the elements out in the morning. For example, a room that is sun-soaked by early morning each day may make it hard for quests to get sufficient sleep. Some blackout curtains or a new set of blinds allows guests to determine the amount of natural light that will greet them each morning.

Some simple tips can help holiday hosts turn their guest rooms into welcoming spaces for their loved ones.



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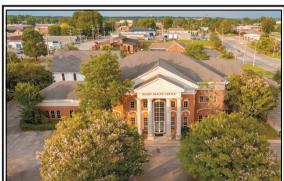
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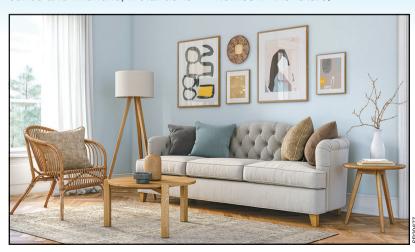
DID YOU KNOW?

- by METRO NEWS -

Certain areas of a home are more likely to draw the interest of prospective buyers when a house goes on the market. When that day comes, many realtors and homeowners rely on staging to make a home as attractive as possible during an open house or appointment viewing. According to a 2019 report from the National Association of Realtors, staging the living room is most important for buyers, with 47 percent of buyers indicating a well-staged living room had an effect on their view of the home. The owner's suite (42 percent) and the kitchen (35 percent) were found to be the next most important rooms to stage. Though the report is generally concerned with selling a home, the conclusions in the

report are something renovationminded homeowners can keep in mind. If prospective buyers are most impressed by wellstaged living rooms, owner's' suites and kitchens, it stands to

reason that those same rooms. when well-designed and recently renovated, will elicit a similarly positive reaction if homeowners ultimately decide to sell their homes in the future.





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1211 E. Decatur St., Tuscumbia, AL

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543 High StreetClose to UNA. 2brs, large eat in kitchen, fenced yard, 2 out buildings. \$89,900.

Did you know?

by Metro News

While home buyers typically take their time to examine each room and space inside and outside a home before making an offer, real estate experts note that two rooms in particular seem to merit the closest inspection among prospective buyers. Kitchens and the bathroom in an owner's suite can dramatically increase

the value of a home. They recommends that homeowners consider their neighborhood and identify their target buyers prior to beginning a kitchen or owner's suite renovation, as such variables can provide direction and inspiration when refurbishing these widely valued areas in a home.

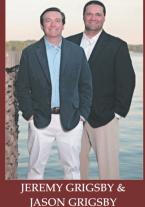




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855 Turtle Cove WF Lot - Killen

Beautiful Waterfront Lot with a Breathtaking View! This unique 1.38+/- acre property is perfectly located in Killen, just off of Hwy 72, in Turtle Cove. The 147 feet of waterfront offers year-round water on Six Mile Creek, just around the bend from Wilson Lake. Must see to appreciate. \$324,900



Lingerlost Landing Killen

Waterfront Lots in Lingerlost Landing. Come be a part of this exciting new development in the heart of Killen with relaxing river frontage, beautiful views and enchanting wooded acreage. Call for more info. ONLY 5 WATERFRONT LOTS LEFT!



3.92 +/- Ac CR 63

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1 Ac Commercial Lot - Killen Great 1+/- acre commercial lot in Killen. With road frontage Alabama St, this corner facing

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Commercial Lot, 0.69+/- Ac, Hwy 72 - Killen Great location on Hwy 72 in the Killen city limits. This lot offers excellent commercial potential with frontage on Hwy 72 and Old Lexington Road \$165,000



68+/-Ac on Six Mile Creek - Killen

If you're looking for stunning land for recreation or to build the estate of your dreams, this rare property is for you. Perfectly located in Killen, this 68+/- acre tract offers just about everything you could ask for. Beautiful pastures and mature hardwoods abound on the level to rolling terrain. With over 1,000 feet of frontage on Six Mile Creek, peaceful country living is a given. You must see this outstanding gem to appreciate its potential. Co Rd 25 Killen, \$724,900



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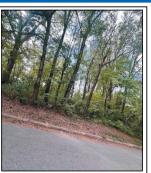


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1.69 acres MLS# 522617 **Asking Price: \$135.000**

0 Bavard Ave.,

Florence

Renovations that help sell homes

- by METRO NEWS -

The adage "there's a lid for every pot" suggests that, even in relation to the real estate market, there's bound to be a buyer for every home on the market. Price is a significant variable in the minds of potential buyers, but there are additional factors that can affect the impression people get of a given home.

Certain home features can tip the scales in favor of sellers. In fact, various renovations can help sell homes more readily. And these renovations need not cost a fortune. Putting a home on the market can be stressful, but these renovations may help it sell fast.

• A fresh coat of paint: Although painting is relatively inexpensive and a job that some do-it-yourselfers can tackle, it's not a task relished by many. Painting is messy, it takes time, and requires moving furniture. In fact, prepping a room for painting often is the toughest component of any painting job. But fresh coats of paint can create a strong first impression. Choose a neutral color and get painting. Jennie Norris, chairwoman for the International Association of Home Staging

Professionals, says gray is a "safe" color that has been trending in recent years.

- Minor bathroom remodel: Remove dated wall coverings, replace fixtures, consider re-glazing or replacing an old tub, and swap old shower doors for fast fixes in a bathroom. If there's more room in the budget, replacing a tub, tile surround, floor, toilet, sink, vanity, and fixtures can cost roughly \$10,500, says HGTV. You'll recoup an average of \$10,700 at resale, making a minor bathroom remodel a potentially worthy investment.
- Redone kitchen: The kitchen tends to be the hub of a home. This room gets the most usage and attention of any space, and it's a great place to focus your remodeling attention. The National Association of the Remodeling Industry estimates that homeowners can recover up to 52 percent of the cost of a kitchen upgrade upon selling a home. Buyers want a functional and updated kitchen. Trending features include drawerstyle microwaves and dishwashers, commercial ranges, hidden outlets, and even wine refrigerators.
- Updated heating and cooling system: Better Homes and Gardens reports that homeowners may be able to recoup 85 percent of the cost of new HVAC systems when they sell their homes. Heating, cooling and ventilation components are vital to maintain. You don't want buyers to be taken aback by an older system, and many millennial buyers are not willing to overlook old mechanical systems.
- Fresh landscaping: A home's exterior is the first thing buyers will see. If they pull up to a home with eye-catching landscaping and outdoor areas that are attractive yet functional, they're more likely to be intrigued. Often buyers will equate a home that features an impressive exterior with upkeep inside as well. The American Nursery Landscape Association says the average homeowner may spend \$3,500 for landscaping.

Improving a home's chances to sell quickly and at a higher price often comes down to making smart improvements that catch the eyes of buyers.



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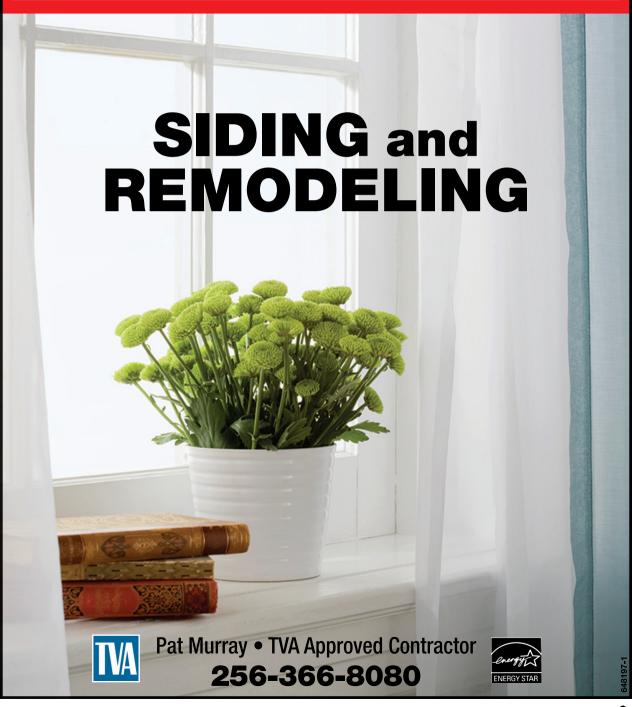
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The basics of basement conversion projects

by Metro News

Space is a sought-after commodity in real estate. Buyers prioritize numerous variables when searching for a new home, and square footage is often near the top of their lists.

The real estate market has been highly competitive in recent years, and home prices have remained high as a result. That reality has prompted some current homeowners who feel they have outgrown their homes to look for ways to increase the usable space in their existing properties. Basement conversions are one way to add more space. Homeowners mulling a basement conversion project can learn the basics of the project as they try to determine if such renovations are right for them.

 Basement conversion projects can be costly. Though the final cost of a conversion project can vary widely depending on the condition and accessibility of the existing space, estimates range from around \$45,000 to as much as \$150,000. The home renovation experts at Angi.com note that the average price for excavation is \$37,000. Of course, homeowners who are simply hoping to repurpose an existing basement likely won't need to pay for excavation. Accessibility is another notable variable that can affect the final cost. If the current space is a crawl space, potentially costly structural

changes may be necessary to ensure contractors and eventually residents can access the area. Basements that are already easily accessible won't require such expenditures.

- Ventilation is a must. Finished basements must be adequately ventilated so moisture can be controlled. Without sufficient ventilation, the damp conditions common in many basements can foster the growth of mold. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America notes that inhaled mold spores can trigger allergic reactions in some people, potentially leading to runny nose, postnasal drip, red and watery eyes, and itchy eyes, nose, ears, and mouth, among other symptoms. Waterproofing systems and adequate ventilation can prevent mold growth in a basement, and these should be integral components of the desian.
- Permits are part of the process. Basement conversions are considered major projects, and thus typically require homeowners and contractors to secure permits before any work is done. Permits may be necessary at various stages of the project. Homeowners who ignore laws regarding permits will have trouble selling their

homes down the road, as it can be difficult if not impossible to secure a certificate of occupancy if renovations were made without securing the proper permits. In addition, securing necessary permits for each phase of the project can ensure final approval of the project. If permits are not secured along the way, local officials may insist work be redone to adhere to local laws, which can make the project even more costly.

• Basement conversions take time. The time a project takes will depend on the condition of the space at the start of the project and various details unique to each conversion. However, various contractors indicate projects take about two to three months once they begin. That timeline does not include the pre-project process of finding a contractor, soliciting design plans or preparing the rest of the home for such a significant and lengthy undertaking.

Basement conversion projects can add significant square footage to a home. Recognition of what such projects entail can help homeowners decide if this is the best way for them to increase livable space in their homes.



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]	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
2	23	24	25	26	27	28	1		

March 2025							
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30	31	1	2	3	4	5	

	APRIL 2025									
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	May 2025								
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	JULY 2025								
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August 2025									
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28	8	29	30	1	2	3	4		

	OCTOBER 2025								
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26	27	28	29	30	31	1			

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November 2025									
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@reen = Publication Dates • Yellow = Copy Deadline for Glossy Cover Ads Red = Copy Deadline for Inside Book Ads • Purple = Glossy Cover Ads Approved **Blue** = Inside Book Pages Approved

Why it pays to work with a real estate agent

by Metro News

Equity, pre-approval, contingencies, appraisal. These are terms associated with buying real estate, but even seasoned home buyers may not fully understand them. Navigating the real estate market can be challenging, but in today's economic climate, marked by inflation, high interest rates and high home prices across the country, it is more important than ever to understand the minutiae that is involved in buying and selling property. That's just one of many reasons why buyers and sellers can benefit from the help of a seasoned real estate professional.

Types of real estate professionals

Many people use the terms real estate agent, real estate broker and REALTOR® interchangeably. While these professionals handle many similar tasks, there are some notable distinctions between them. A REALTOR® is a registered term used to describe a real estate professional who is a member of the National Association of REALTORS®. These individuals must adhere to a strict code of ethics, and have access to market data and transaction management services unique to this specific trade organization. A real estate agent is licensed to help people buy and sell real estate, and is paid a commission when a deal is completed. A real estate broker does the same jobs as an agent, but is also licensed to work independently and may employ his or her own agents. The broker also may get a percentage of the commission from agents in addition to his or her own commissions, according to Investopedia. **Buyer and seller**

A professional may represent either the buyer or seller or both. A buyer's agent is negotiating for the buyer in the transaction, while a seller's agent negotiates for the seller. Real estate professionals also can represent both parties, known as dual

agency. Typically this does not occur in the same transaction, as that can create a conflict of interest. Commissions and fees are negotiable on real estate transactions, an amount that is split by all real estate professionals working on the transaction.

Why work with a real estate professional?

Homeowners may wonder why they should seek the services of a real estate agent, broker or REALTOR®. That's particularly so for sellers, as buyers typically do not pay a real estate representative any money.

- Expertise: Considering that buying and selling a home is one of the biggest financial transactions one will make, it makes sense to leave it in the hands of experienced professionals.
- Price a home right: Real estate professionals will conduct a market analysis and look at "comps" in the area to determine a price that is fair and will help a house move.
 When working with buyers, the agent or broker also will be able to help them come up with a reasonable offer price.
- Access to MLS: Agents and brokers have access to the Multiple Listing Service, which is widely used across the United States for listing available properties. It helps sellers sell faster and will enable buyers to view multiple properties all in one database.
- Negotiations: Leaving negotiations to a third party removes emotion from the transaction and can help everyone involved resolve issues and agree on acceptable terms.

Buying and selling real estate is a complex process. Real estate professionals can simplify the process and make it more enjoyable for buyers and sellers alike.





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