

# Hints For Your Home

## Top Tips For Improving The Value Of Your Home

(NAPSA)—In tough economic times, it seems one of the best investments homeowners can make is in their house.

From renovating kitchens and baths to upgrading windows and doors, realtors say the right projects could help boost the value of a home. Even simple steps, like adding landscaping, can help improve a house's curb appeal—and a potential buyer's first impression.

But whether you're looking to sell or not, the smart money may be on floors. Money invested to upgrade replacement floor coverings in a home prior to its being resold can be expected to return "substantially more than 100 percent" of the cost of renovation, according to the World Floor Covering Association (WFCA).

In fact, Christopher Davis, the group's president and CEO, says if homeowners invested \$5,000 to replace worn-out floor coverings and then listed their home for sale, "they should factor in an extra \$10,000 to \$15,000 on the selling price."

### Buying, Selling, Refinancing

Davis adds that the value of new floors can be seen whether you're buying a new home, selling, or improving the house you already have.

Indeed, when financed into a mortgage, upgrading floors can be quite affordable. For every \$1,000 spent on floor covering and financed into the mortgage, the buyer's payment usually increases about \$10 a month,



Photo courtesy of Armstrong

**Upgrading floors in a home can be an affordable way to boost its value and improve its look.**

according to Davis. In addition, new floors can often be written off during the first few years of the mortgage.

"Adding \$2,500 of upgraded floor coverings to the purchase price of a house would increase the mortgage payments about \$23 a month, or \$276 annually," he explains.

Mortgage payments (especially during the first few years) are generally on the mortgage's interest and are tax deductible. "That means the \$276, instead of counting towards the principal, can be considered interest paid, thus creating tax savings for homeowners who itemize deductions," says Davis.

### Home Improvements

In addition to being economical, upgrading floors can be easy. It's a good idea to start by doing some basic research and to get a

list of expert and reliable flooring retailers in the area from a site such as [www.wfca.org](http://www.wfca.org).

A retailer can give tips on choosing the right floor for each room in the house and advise on the quality of different flooring types, including hardwood, tile, laminate, resilient and carpet. He or she can also explain the various brands that are available and help you choose a professional installer who can install floors.

### Where To Invest

The first two areas of a home buyers often look at are the kitchen and bathroom, so new resilient floors in the rooms can be an economical way to make a powerful first impression.

Kitchens can be patterned with inexpensive floor tiles for a customized effect. Similarly, adding rows of accent tiles in the bathroom can make it appear more finely detailed and expensive than it actually is.

New floors can also help enhance other rooms, such as bedrooms and master suites. For example, the right floor covering can add an element of sophistication and class that makes each room feel welcoming, familiar and more like home.

For more information, tips and ideas, visit [www.wfca.org](http://www.wfca.org). You can also check out a new magazine from the WFCA, Meredith, and Better Homes and Gardens called Beautiful Flooring. It provides action-oriented information as well as the latest ideas in home flooring.