



BEST HOMES REAL ESTATE, LTD
3288 DARBY GLEN BLVD
HILLIARD OH 43026-3808

Interesting,
informative
real estate
news for you.

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Take 5: Home remodel projects with great ROI

Here are five of the best cost vs. value upgrades to consider if you're thinking of remodeling your home, according to Remodeling Magazine.

1. Steel entry door: A new steel door will not only improve your home's curb appeal, but will also improve energy efficiency.

2. Attic conversion: Converting your attic into a bedroom or recreational room can dramatically expand the living space available in your home, yet you don't have to alter the floorplan of your home at all.

3. Fiber-cement siding: When you replace your current siding with

fiber-cement, you improve your home's resistance to moisture, pests, rot, and fire. It's also extremely durable, so in the long haul you want spend as much on maintenance or repainting.

4. Energy-efficient windows: This one is particularly valuable for older homes. Upgrading to energy-efficient windows can lead to remarkable savings in monthly energy costs.

5. Kitchen remodel: New appliances, new cabinets, new backsplash ... it all adds up to one of the highest returns on investment according to Cost vs. Value reports.

More signs of an improving housing market

Total homes sales for 2013 were the highest of any year since 2006, according to a December 2013 report from the National Association of Realtors.

There were 5.09 million total sales in 2013, a 9.1 percent increase over the previous year.

"Existing-home sales have risen nearly 20 percent since 2011, with job growth, record low mortgage interest rates and a large

pent-up demand driving the market," NAR chief economist Lawrence Yun said.

The national median price for existing homes sales was \$197,100. That's an 11.5 percent increase from the median price in 2012 (\$176,800).

Of course, all real estate is local, so contact a trusted real estate professional for information on market trends in your area.

