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# Close the sale on your home with these 5 simple makeover ideas

Published June 20, 2012 NewsCore



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If you're attempting to sell your home in this tricky market, consider these five effective, inexpensive home makeover ideas to help you add buyer appeal. SA Jernigan, a northern California-based interior designer and founder of [Renaissance Designs](#), offers her expertise.

## 1. Conceal visual offenders

Capable of neutralizing the most dated or worn pieces of furniture, ready-made slip covers provide an easy solution to updating unattractive indoor spaces.

Jernigan says this works wonders in a bedroom. "Bed-in-a-bag bedding ensembles are available from discount stores and can provide a low-cost makeover for a bedroom. If the ensemble comes with matching sheets, it's possible to fabricate these into ad-hoc window treatments, too," she says.

Lighting also plays a decisive role in the overall appearance of a room. Jernigan encourages homeowners to "take a look at fixtures, and if they haven't been replaced for a decade or more, it may be a good decision to upgrade them."

Remember to use quality bulbs with appropriate wattage to showcase each room in, quite literally, its best light. Select bulbs with warmer hues for a flattering effect on skin tones in bathrooms or vanity areas.

## 2. Paint strategically

Jernigan says the right hue of paint can play up (or play down) key architectural features. Is the fireplace adrift in a sea of off-white walls?

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Painting parts of the fireplace will give new importance to this critical feature, she advises. Ditto for a bay window area that is otherwise lost amid walls of the same color.

### 3. Give a room with a sagging ceiling a virtual face lift

Rooms with lower ceilings benefit from strong vertical lines. For instance, Jernigan says this can be accomplished by cutting some wild foliage and placing 6-inch to 7-inch branches in a suitably sized narrow holder.

"Be creative. Something like an umbrella stand might work well," she says. "Also consider mounting draperies from a ceiling mount rod to give the room a visual lift."

### 4. Scour, clean, and then spit shine

It's effectually impossible to make your home too clean. "Elbow grease can and will pay off, so make it spotless and buyers will respond," she advises.

Pay special attention to areas including the interior of the fridge, laundry room and bathrooms. Accordingly, Jernigan places utmost importance on the way a home smells. "Is it fresh and inviting? Or are there musty, smoky, or pet odors? Believe me, buyers can and will notice," says Jernigan, who recommends using lemon-fresh or other citrus-based cleaners.

### 5. Toss in a bit of idealism

Jernigan advocates the "little things," like fresh flowers, live plants and bowls of fresh fruit -- all the cozy touches that spell home, or at least our idealized version of it.

"The romance of staging means setting dining tables, and/or creating small vignettes, like a folded newspaper and coffee cup on a tray by a chaise lounge."

**Her final tip: "when in doubt, take it out."** A buyer wants to see the house. Removing excess items from kitchen and bathroom countertops instantly helps buyers by eliminating the need to overlook countless belongings.

For more information, check out the annual [2012 Cost vs. Value Report](#) by Realtor.com, which highlights remodeling projects that create the most equity. Benjamin Moore's [2012 Color Trends](#) allows you to replicate the palettes your buyers may be seeing elsewhere.

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