

SRES[®] MARKETPLACE

CONSUMER NEWSLETTER

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Where to Put Aging-in-Place Dollars

Bankrate's "How do aging-in-place remodels affect a home's value?" (<https://bit.ly/3CeAKPT>) is worth reading, especially if you're about to renovate your house.

When you weigh what aging-in-place modifications to make, a significant consideration is the effect your changes will have on the resale value of your home.

Will they help or hurt?

To find out, Bankrate talked with certified aging-in-place specialists.

One takeaway: Look to universal design modifications -- hands-free faucets and dimmer switches, for example -- that benefit multiple generations. Those won't hurt resale value.

After all, institutional-style designs and permanent features like exterior metal ramps may make a home less attractive to future buyers.

The other universally appealing modifications that can improve your home's value include a full bathroom on the main floor, lever door handles, smart lighting systems, and doorways at least three feet wide.

Those that detract from resale value include permanent exterior ramps (if you need a ramp, look for a temporary one that can be removed easily), an elevator, and walk-in bathtubs.

Another consideration is money, and the piece outlines the potential cost of incorporating aging-in-place features, including converting a first floor living space into a bedroom and bathroom (\$100,000-plus), installing grab bars in a bathroom (\$600 to \$750), and installing a temporary ramp (\$1,500 to \$1,800) or a permanent one (\$22,000-plus).

For more about universal design principles, see:

- National Association of Homebuilders (<https://bit.ly/3SCL5KI>)
- The Universal Design Living Laboratory (<https://bit.ly/3y2Sc7p>)
- The Universal Design Network of Canada (<https://bit.ly/3E7EvrJ>)

Bathroom Renovation Trends

The annual Houzz Bathroom research is always a good read, whether you want to make tweaks to be sure your bathroom is keeping up with trends or if you're planning a major renovation.

Here are some highlights from the 2022 U.S. Houzz Bathroom Trends Study.

The biggest trigger for bathroom renovations is an outdated style. This year, 87% of respondents changed the style of their bathroom, with a transitional look being the top choice (25%). That was followed by contemporary and modern (16% each).

The transitional style has been steadily gaining ground in recent years. In 2018, just 16% chose it, but by 2021, 19% opted for it. This year's least popular styles include Mediterranean, Rustic, Craftsman, and Eclectic (all at 2%).

There's also a shift in taste around vanities. Though white is still the leading color (32%), 30% opted for wood.

In addition, the popularity of multicolored countertops slid by four percentage points, with most choosing solid colors, including white (59%), gray (10%), and beige (9%, up by two percentage points).

Other motivators for renovating include:

- Finally having the money to make upgrades (28%)
- Improving resale value (28%)
- Personalizing a recently purchased home (22%)
- Safety or health risk, including removing toxic materials and mold (9%).

In addition, homeowners are budgeting more to upgrade their primary bathrooms, with the median spend rising 13% to \$9,000. Spending by homeowners with bigger budgets (the top 10% of project spending) jumped by 17 percent to \$35,000 or more.

Forty-one percent of homeowners say they use their newly renovated bathroom as a place to rest and relax. Features contributing to that vibe include cleanliness, a lack of clutter, soaking in the bath, long showers, and natural light.

Premium features that further enhance the space include a rainfall shower head (52%), dual shower (19%), body sprayer (16%), mood lighting (8%), and a soaking tub (71%).

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See the complete report at <https://bit.ly/3dRU8Jg>.

Facing Grief, Clearing Out a Loved One's House

Anyone who has emptied a loved one's house after a death or a move to a nursing home knows the unique melancholy it brings.

Scraps of paper, a song, or a piece of clothing can all send you down a rabbit hole of memories and bring on waves of grief.

That's some of what Anderson Cooper covers in his new podcast "All There Is." (<https://apple.co/3SFbEPA>)

The setting for the first episode is his late mother's New York City apartment, where Cooper is packing her things.

The task is daunting. Isn't it always?

His mother was Gloria Vanderbilt, a woman born into incredible wealth who made her mark in the fashion industry with her brand of women's jeans in the 1970s and 1980s.

Vanderbilt saved everything, even mundane notes, saying, "I'll be back at 10."

Cooper faced plowing through books, journals, thousands of Christmas cards and photos, telegrams from Frank Sinatra, and even the clothing Vanderbilt was wearing -- boxed and labeled -- when another son committed suicide in front of her years earlier.

He likens the process to an archeological dig.

It forces Cooper to face not just his mom's death but also the grief and loss of his brother and his father, who died when Cooper was young decades earlier.

Plus, he realizes he's the last living person in his small family and now the keeper of its memories.

The podcast is poignant and, at times, funny. Cooper sheds light on and articulates what many cope with when sifting through the remnants of a life.

"We don't talk about loss and grief very much, which is odd because they're among the most universal of human experiences. All of us will lose people we love," he says. "And yet, when you're the one grieving, it often feels like you're all alone."

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"You're not" is just one of the podcast's takeaways.

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