

# September



*From Your Local  
Real Estate Expert*

## 10 Kitchen and Bathroom Updates You Won't Regret

### *Did You Know...*

Red bricks get their color from the iron in the clay, which oxidizes during firing, while darker bricks take on deeper hues due to higher firing temperatures.



September is a popular time to consider renovations, and if you are looking to add value to your home, consider the following reno tips:

- 1. Maximize Storage and Organization:** Consider installing pull-out drawers, lazy Susan's, and built-in organizers to keep your kitchen functional and clutter-free. Kitchen islands with extra storage also add both workspace and style. Floating vanities save floor space and create a modern look. Built-in shelves and cabinets can keep toiletries organized and out of sight.
- 2. Upgrade to Water-Efficient Fixtures:** Choose low-flow faucets, showerheads, and toilets to reduce water consumption without sacrificing comfort or performance.
- 3. Choose Durable Materials:** Quartz countertops are a popular choice for durability and easy maintenance. They're scratch-resistant and non-porous, making them ideal for high-use kitchens and bathrooms. Porcelain tiles for floors and walls are durable, moisture-resistant, and easy to clean, making them ideal for bathrooms.
- 4. Upgrade Lighting:** Combine ambient, task, and accent lighting to make the kitchen functional and inviting. Pendant lights over islands, under-cabinet lighting, and recessed ceiling lights are excellent choices. Consider adding dimmers for versatile light control.
- 5. Focus on Quality Appliances:** Invest in energy-efficient appliances for long-term savings. Look for models with smart features, which can streamline cooking and save energy.
- 6. Add a Backsplash:** A backsplash can add visual interest and protect walls. Tiles, particularly subway and mosaic styles, are both timeless and easy to clean.
- 7. Add Heated Flooring:** Heated floors can increase comfort, especially in colder climates. Radiant floor heating is a popular choice in bathroom renovations for a luxurious, cozy feel.

# Don't Go In Blind!

## 8 Key Questions Every Buyer and Seller Should Ask



- **What is your home worth, and how should you price it?** Consider factors like location, condition, and recent comparable sales. Then, decide on a pricing strategy: should you price competitively or leave room to negotiate?
- **How can you increase your home's appeal and value?** Small upgrades and thoughtful staging can go a long way in attracting buyers. Focus on improvements with a strong return on investment to maximize your sale potential.
- **How long will it take to buy or sell?** Whether you're buying or selling, you probably want to know the timeline so you can plan accordingly. Learn what factors might speed things up or slow them down.
- **What costs should you expect when buying or selling?** From closing costs and agent fees to potential hidden expenses, understanding the financial side of buying or selling is essential.
- **What are the legal and financial essentials you need to know?** The home-buying or selling process has a lot of disclosures to financing options. Avoid legal missteps and understand contract details and contingencies to make smart, informed decisions.
- **How should you handle offers and negotiations?** Whether you're making an offer as a buyer or reviewing one as a seller, knowing how to negotiate is crucial. Talk to your agent to understand evaluating offers, understanding contingencies, and knowing what's included in the sale.
- **What should you expect from inspections and appraisals?** Understand what inspectors look for, what appraisals involve, and how to interpret results so you know your next move.
- **What risks should you watch out for, and how can you protect yourself?** Buying or selling involves risk—market fluctuations, home issues, and potential deal-breakers. Know the exit strategies, contingencies, and ways to protect yourself if things don't go as planned.

## *Weird, but True!*

Research in Japan, where wooden interiors are prevalent in homes and wellness centers, indicates that being in a wooden environment can have a calming effect similar to spending time in a forest. This concept, known as "forest bathing" or shinrin-yoku, suggests that wooden materials in home design may replicate some of these therapeutic effects.



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