



Master suite upgrades: the secret to a speedier home sale

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(BPT) - All signs point to a hearty real estate market this summer. Experts say more inventory will be available and buyers will have an easier time getting mortgages, all of which means more competition among sellers.

If you plan to put your home on the market this spring or summer, you might be looking for the most cost-effective renovations to set your house apart from the competition. Assuming you've already taken care of the two top rooms to renovate - kitchen and bathroom - what's your next move?

Three words: master suite upgrades.

Americans spend a lot of time in the bedroom. The master suite is, arguably, the area of the house where you most want to feel like the king or queen of your domain. After you've wowed potential buyers with a great kitchen and bathroom, a beautiful master suite could be the feature that seals the deal.

A mid-range master suite addition recoups 67.5 percent of its cost at the time of resale, according to [Remodeling Magazine's Cost vs. Value Report](http://www.remodeling.hw.net/cost-vs-value/2014/) (<http://www.remodeling.hw.net/cost-vs-value/2014/>). Fortunately, you can create a big impact on a master suite with a modest remodeling budget.

The luxury of light and fresh air

Many masters occupy the second floor, making them prime locations for an upgrade that is attention-grabbing, energy-efficient and practical, all without being costly: adding skylights.

Natural light and fresh air can make a room feel larger, more open and more welcoming. Opening a wall to add a window is rarely practical, but skylights can bring natural light and improve air quality in a master with less fuss. If yours is on the first floor, tubular skylights, such as Sun Tunnels by skylight maker [Velux America](http://www.veluxusa.com) (<http://www.veluxusa.com>), can deliver natural light into spots where a traditional skylight won't work.

For your second-floor master, an ENERGY STAR-certified [solar-powered, fresh-air skylight](http://skylights.veluxusa.com/consumer/products/residential_skylights/the_no_leak_skylight/deck_mounted/) (http://skylights.veluxusa.com/consumer/products/residential_skylights/the_no_leak_skylight/deck_mounted/) provides daylighting, privacy and more security than an open window (always a concern for a bedroom), as well as cost-effective passive ventilation. Add solar-powered blinds and skylight energy performance ratings improve by as much as 45 percent. Even better, the installation of solar-powered skylights and blinds, plus installation costs, can be eligible for a 30 percent federal tax credit. Visit

www.whyskylights.com (<http://www.whyskylights.com>) to learn more. There's a [skylight planner app](http://www.whyskylights.com/planner) (<http://www.whyskylights.com/planner>) there that will allow you to visualize skylights in your own home and to calculate your potential tax savings.

Little things mean a lot

Often, sellers focus on big-picture issues and overlook the small details that win buyers' hearts. For example, while it's important to paint the walls a neutral, appealing color, don't forget to repaint baseboards, window trim, ceilings and inside closets, too – all significantly affect the overall look of a room. Even when you account for the extra time and paint needed for trim, painting remains one of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to freshen a room's appearance.

Be sure to repaint the master bathroom in a color that complements the master bedroom. Add decadent but cost-effective touches like plush towels, a towel-warming rack and an upgraded shower head and faucets. Consider the shower door. Is it old and shabby-looking with glass that has become hazy? Replacing it is a simple, quick fix that will put a bright face on the shower stall. Swap out a straight shower curtain rod for a curved one that greatly increases the spaciousness of the shower area.

Add light, airy curtains to make the room look bigger and brighter, luxurious bedding to impart a restful atmosphere, and you'll have created a master suite that's sure to be an asset when it's time to sell.