

THE CONNECTICUT DESIGN GUIDE

2020

\$19.95

DESIGNING YOUR DREAM HOUSE
EMBRACING THE OUTDOORS | MAKING A MOVE
DREAMING OF KITCHENS AND BATHS
READY, SET, DECORATE! | SHOPPING ROOM BY ROOM

FROM THE EDITORS OF

CTC&G

MAKING A MOVE

Whether you are buying or selling, sooner or later you'll have to pack up and move. We've outlined a schedule to ensure a smooth transition, plus tips from professional packers and movers. And if you are looking to sell, here are the projects Realtors feel will give you the greatest return on investment and help seal the deal.



FEATURING:

Compass – Brian Milton





WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU MOVE

Thinking about putting your home on the market? Want to know what improvements will add value to your home? You are not alone. In fact, the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) and the National Association of Realtors (NAR) want to know the answers too. Each year, they conduct a cost vs. value report to determine which home improvements will yield the highest return. The 2019 Remodeling Impact report compares 20 projects, analyzing which improvements will appeal to buyers and estimating how much homeowners can recover from the cost of specific projects. Interestingly enough, the report found that 35 percent of the homeowners polled would rather move to another home than remodel their current home.

INTERIOR PROJECTS

REALTOR RANK OF PROJECTS LIKELY VALUE TO THE HOME FOR RESALE (HIGHEST TO LOWEST)

- COMPLETE KITCHEN RENOVATION
- KITCHEN UPGRADE
- HVAC REPLACEMENT
- NEW MASTER SUITE/ OWNERS SUITE
- BATHROOM RENOVATION
- BASEMENT CONVERSION TO LIVING AREA
- ADD NEW BATHROOM
- NEW WOOD FLOORING
- HARDWOOD FLOORING REFINISH
- ATTIC CONVERSION TO LIVING AREA

EXTERIOR PROJECTS

REALTOR RANK OF PROJECTS LIKELY VALUE TO THE HOME FOR RESALE (HIGHEST TO LOWEST)

- NEW ROOFING
- NEW VINYL WINDOWS
- NEW FIBER-CEMENT SIDING
- NEW WOOD WINDOWS
- NEW VINYL SIDING
- NEW GARAGE DOOR
- NEW STEEL FRONT DOOR
- NEW FIBERGLASS FRONT DOOR

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WE ASK THE EXPERTS

Holly Giordano
William Pitt Sotheby's
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Carolyn Klemm
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THE HOUSING MARKET AND BUYER DEMANDS vary by region, so we asked local Realtors to give us their take on which home improvements will attract buyers and facilitate a sale in Connecticut.

"Kitchens and bathrooms are the two biggest improvements a homeowner can make to get a return on investment or an increased asking price. With busy lifestyles, homeowners don't feel equipped to manage the hassle of a major renovation. They would prefer to roll the home improvement into a mortgage, rather than start a new renovation with cash out of pocket." —**Holly Giordano**

"NEW APPLIANCES ARE AN EASY FIX AND A SMALL INVESTMENT THAT BUYERS NOTICE."

—**Carolyn Klemm**

"Fresh paint is the best bang for the buck. White and neutral tones go a long way." —**Ira Goldspiel**

"THINGS THAT FREAK OUT BUYERS ARE OLD ROOFS, CRACKED DRIVEWAYS AND MOLDY, SMELLY BASEMENTS. BUYERS WILL PAY MORE THAN THE REPLACEMENT COST BECAUSE OF THE ANTICIPATED HEADACHE THAT REPAIRS WILL CAUSE." —**Jennifer Leahy**

"If you need to expand, look for existing square footage, like a garage, basement or attic. Adding onto a house can be tricky with zoning and septic requirements. I find people are converting their garages into living space, adding a first floor master or family room, and then building a separate barn-like garage." —**Carolyn Klemm**

"OUTDOOR LIVING SPACES ARE EXTREMELY DESIRABLE. PATIOS, PERGOLAS, OUTDOOR KITCHENS, FIREPLACES AND FIRE PITS ARE ALL WELCOME ADDITIONS." —**Michael Mombello**

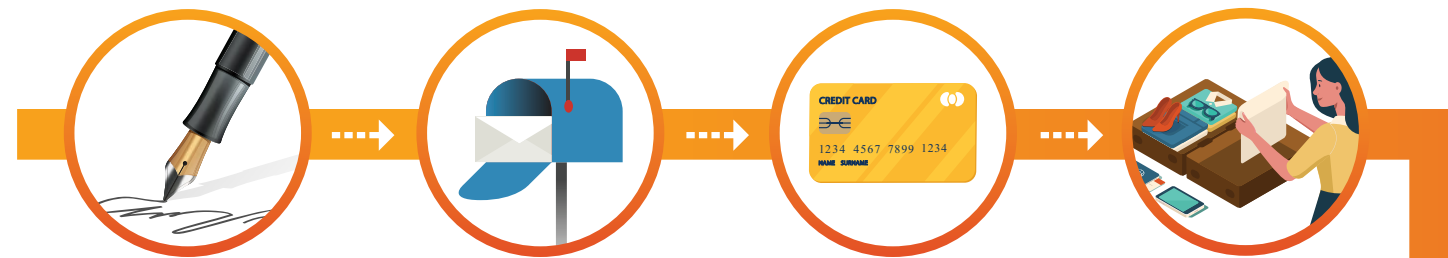
"NEW GARAGE DOORS ARE A SUPER EASY WAY TO CHANGE THE LOOK OF A HOME, FROM CHEAP TO CHIC!" —**Holly Giordano**



PHOTOGRAPHS BY: (ABOVE) PAUL JOHNSON (FEBRUARY 2019); (RIGHT) ELLEN McDERMOTT (FEBRUARY 2019)

TACKLING A MOVE

MOVING? The dreaded “M” word can conjure up fear and panic and can be an overwhelming process. We’ve outlined a timeline to break down the chores into smaller, doable steps.



FOUR TO EIGHT WEEKS OUT:

The deal is signed and you are ready to move...now what?

Start interviewing moving companies. Give them a general idea of your move date and discuss services and costs. May to September is the peak season for movers, so expect to pay more and book early.

Take an inventory of your home. Video or photograph your rooms and contents for future reference, in case anything is lost or damaged and as a reminder when setting up your new home.

Once the closing is set, book time off from your job and clear your calendar, so you can pack and supervise the move.

Start getting rid of things! Donate or give away unwanted furnishings and clothing.

Dispose of hazardous items. Movers cannot transport things like propane, paint, fertilizers and pool chemicals. See if your town has a hazardous waste collection day.

Pack nonessentials first. These are the things you won't need for awhile. Label and color code boxes, designating the room and its contents.

THREE WEEKS OUT:

Confirm movers.

Arrange for child and pet care for moving day.

Notify service providers of your move-out date, including utility, postal, insurance, trash, house cleaner, pool maintenance and landscape services.

Gather up warranty and owner's manuals to leave for the new owners. Share a list of vendors you were happy with and request the same from your sellers.

THE WEEK BEFORE:

Confirm movers, pet and childcare!

Make a list and set aside the things you anticipate needing on moving day and the first week in your new home—kitchen essentials, linens, toiletries, medications and clothing. These items can make the move in your car.

Secure valuables. Put jewelry in a safety deposit box and gather together important paperwork to store in a safe place on moving day.

Make special arrangements for extra trash and recycling pick ups, if needed.

THE DAY BEFORE:

Charge all devices.

Put together a moving-day box with necessary items, like garbage bags, tape, tool kit, paper towels, toilet paper, phone and computer chargers, bed linens and pet food. Pack a bag for the upcoming week with clothes, toiletries and medications.

Have water and tip money ready for the movers (\$20 per person is fair).



IT'S YOUR MOVING DAY:

Be on hand to answer the movers' questions and advise about fragile items. Alert movers if you notice that anything is damaged or missing.

Leave behind the keys, garage door openers and any security codes.

Have the house cleaned or swept, check the basement, attic, cabinets and closets to be sure everything is cleared.

AT YOUR NEW HOME:

Change the locks.

Check the smoke alarms and CO₂ detectors.

Confirm that all the utilities have been taken out of your name at your old location.

Save all your moving receipts for tax purposes.

Now it's time to relax and meet the neighbors!

OUT OF TOWN MOVES

Moving long distance? Make travel reservations and pet arrangements in advance.

If you have young children, secure transcripts and schedule a visit to the new school.

Forward medical records/prescriptions and vet records.

Update health care, auto and homeowners insurance.

Cancel local accounts and memberships.

Get a new driver's license, if needed, and register to vote in your new town.



DON'T HAVE THE TIME OR THE ENERGY TO TAKE ON A MOVE? Darien-based *The Settler* company can do it for you. Jackie and Pinny Randall share their tactics for managing a move.

HOW DO YOU WORK WITH HOMEOWNERS? The Settler takes care of everything. We use a 12-step process to keep the move on track. We start by inventorying all the contents of a home, then sort, pack, tag and catalog those items that will be going into the new home. We help homeowners determine what will be given away to children, family or friends, and what can be sold, recycled or donated. We will recommend movers, get a dumpster, have items brought to recycling or thrift stores and arrange for a dealer to evaluate items that might be valuable.

WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL MOVE? Discipline and organization!

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST STRESSORS FOR HOMEOWNERS? A lot of our clients are frozen in panic and don't know where to begin. We break it down room-by-room and start with the larger contents of the room—the furniture. From there, we move on to the cabinets and closets, identifying what to keep and what to get rid of with color-coded stickers or Post-it notes. We tell homeowners not to pull contents out of the closets or cabinets until it's time to physically remove the items from the home. Creating piles around your home just creates chaos and more stress.

WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF THE PROCESS? Getting rid of things that have sentimental value and downsizing. Sorting through things is the most time-consuming and emotional task. We remind clients that if they have not used, touched or worn something in a year or two, then why move it. It is costly to pack and move things that will not be utilized in the next home. We remind our clients that it is the memory that holds the special place in one's heart, not the object, especially if it's been packed away and out of sight for years.

CAN YOU SHARE SOME OF THE MOST UNUSUAL THINGS YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED DURING A MOVE? We find lots of strange things in people's attics. One client had a bazooka from World War II. We once spotted original music manuscripts by Beethoven and Chopin that sold at auction for more than \$100,000.



For additional information, check out these helpful websites: moving.com; updater.com; usps.com.

PHOTOGRAPH (RIGHT) ELLEN McDERMOTT