

YOUR HOME FEBRUARY 2009

TIPS AND TRENDS TO HELP MAXIMIZE HOME BUYING AND SELLING

Color MATTERS



Gray is the new neutral, blue is the new symbol of the environment and yellow will add energy and optimism to your surroundings. At least, those are the latest trends reported by the Color Marketing Group (CMG), a not-for-profit association of color design professionals.

Experts at CMG say the top color choices for 2009 are influenced by the public's concern about the economy and their optimism for the future. People are looking for colors that are safe, familiar and comforting. Consumers also increasingly are drawn to colors and products that reflect a growing desire for an environmentally "greener" world. CMG reports these top color trends for 2009:

- Purple is a hot color for 2009, influenced by the recent presidential election (think Republican red mixed with Democratic blue). For example, grayed-out violet works equally well as an accent or as a neutral.
- Blue is the new "green" to create environmental awareness.
- Complex neutral colors, like cooled-down, grayed-out browns and grays, satisfy the urge toward classic colors in an economically challenged time.
- Bright vivid yellow will be a stand-out accent color that provides energy amidst the sobering effects of the gray neutrals.
- Bright accents influenced by far-away countries like India, China and Turkey will add an exotic touch. Look for colors that are prominent in these countries, including shades of orange, red, yellow, turquoise and teal.
- White is showing up more in corporate board rooms. It represents purity of thought, motive and result, which is expected from many businesses.

Appliance Overload

When shopping for new appliances, remember that looks aren't everything. Features, capacity and energy-efficiency are important factors as well.

Before buying a new appliance, keep track of your appliance usage for one week. For example, note the number and size of your laundry loads, what items you reach for most often in your refrigerator or what meals you cook on the stove. This will help you determine what features will be most beneficial. Also include a list of problem areas, which will help you choose a new appliance that offers better solutions.

For a variety of appliances, available space can be a major stumbling block. Before you make your choice, be sure to measure the footprint, height and width of the appliance area, as well as the door swing or space needed to open doors, drawers and lids. Also measure any doorways or hallways to make sure the new appliance can pass through when it's time to install.

Energy-efficient models of some appliances can offer significant savings. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, appliances account for about 20 percent of a household's energy consumption. Appliances that feature the Energy Star label have been tested to meet standards for energy efficiency.



fast fact >> >> >> >> >> >> >>

Alexander Graham Bell applied for a patent on the telephone on Valentine's Day in 1876.



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Just Like New

Restoring a piece of furniture can seem like a daunting task, but with a little time and patience many projects can be fairly easy. Here are some tips for making your old furniture look like new.

Before beginning, apply a small amount of furniture restoration cleaner in an inconspicuous spot to determine if it is compatible with the furniture's finish. Thoroughly inspect the piece to determine where the worst build up is and clear away any obstructions such as splinters or stray nails. Remove all hardware (handles, etc.) to make the restoration easier.

Experts recommend working in 10- or 12-inch sections first, and then going over the entire area (top of table, side of piece, etc.). This will ensure a more thorough cleaning. Use a small paintbrush or toothbrush to clean hard-to-reach places or any place that may have extra buildup. Clean the entire piece a second time to make sure it is free of all silicone, wax, polish and dust.

If you don't feel comfortable handling pieces that need to be repaired or replaced, such as a broken leg, a local furniture shop can help. If you are doing the repairs yourself, make sure to use the appropriate adhesive. You'll want to duplicate the original glue as closely as possible; this is especially important for older pieces.

Before waxing or polishing the finished product, use a damp cloth to remove any final dust and fingerprints, then buff with a clean dry cloth and use wax or polish sparingly. Before you know it, your old furniture will seem like brand new.

Sources: Refinishfurniture.com, Howstuffworks.com



WORK WITH A CRS AGENT

Buying a home is one of the biggest and most emotional decisions you will ever make. So it's important to work with someone who can provide sound advice and a steady, guiding hand when you need it. That's why a CRS agent is the best person for the job.

A Certified Residential Specialist (CRS) is among the top 4 percent of all agents in the country. CRS agents have achieved a high volume of transactions and advanced training in areas such as business planning, real estate investing, marketing and technology. They must also maintain membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and abide by its Code of Ethics. Why work with anyone else when you can work with a CRS?

* DID YOU KNOW

To clean a computer keyboard, run the sticky side of a post-it note between the keys to collect crumbs and bits of lint.

Source: Real Simple magazine



Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home? Please mention my name.

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