

EXTREME HOME MAKEOVER ON A BUDGET

It's been 10, maybe 15 or more years since you have done anything substantial to your home, it's beyond time for an update. But with the current economy, who can afford an extreme home makeover?

You can, says Sean Castorina of Advantage Handyman Services. Helping people fix up their homes without spending a fortune is one of Sean's specialties.

In the past five years alone, Advantage Handyman Services has done over \$3.5 million in home improvement projects. Castorina also has a Masters in Construction Management, a Class A Contractors License and a very-difficult-to-obtain Builders Designation. Advantage Handyman has three divisions – construction, painting and handyman to help with projects large or small.

Below are some of Sean's tips on updating a home without going broke.

1. SWAP OUT PLUMBING FIXTURES

Can't afford to re-do an entire bathroom? Then simply swap out the plumbing fixtures – the faucets and knobs. You'll be amazed at the change, and it doesn't cost an arm and a leg.

"Get rid of the outdated brass and chrome fixtures and replace them with a brushed nickel or bronze finish. It can make all the difference in your bath," Sean stated.

2. SWAP OUT YOUR KITCHEN SINK

If your sink is one of the old stainless models or is cracked and scratched from years of wear, replace it with a Farmer's Sink, or another modern fixture. Your kitchen will be transformed without depleting your

checking account.

3. ADD LIGHT

"If all the light in a room comes from lamps, you definitely need an update," Sean advises. Sean recommends recessed lighting in any room that uses lamps – kitchens, baths, bonus rooms, bedrooms or any room.

"Sconces in a master bedroom are also great," he added. "Lighting is one of the least expensive ways to update your home."

4. SWAP OUT COVER PLATES AND PLUGS

Sometimes a room can be transformed from old to new with something as simple as new cover plates on the wall switches. A brilliant white, rather than a faded, discolored plate can make a huge difference.

You will need an electrician for the replacement, however. So don't attempt to do this yourself. Advantage Handyman has a number of capable electricians on at your disposal.

5. ADD COLOR

If the walls of your home are still the same color the builder used – antique white or "builder's tan", for example - it's time for a little color. "Painting in an inexpensive way to warm up a room," Sean notes.

6. NEW FLOORING

"Swap out vinyl for ceramic," Sean urges. "Vinyl flooring dates your home and ceramic tile is not nearly as expensive as you may think. Ceramic flooring makes a dramatic difference in a kitchen or bath."



7. DO ONE PROJECT AT A TIME.

"It's not necessary to undertake all these battles at once," Sean states. "If you do one of these projects every six months, your home can be transformed over a three-year period. And if you are thinking about selling your home, updating it will be essential."

Some of these projects can be done by the individual homeowner, but for those who need a little assistance. Advantage Handyman Services can provide skilled labor for each of the suggested updates.

"If you have a start date in mind and a budget, we are the company for you," Sean stated. For more idea on updating your home without spending a lot of money, call Advantage Handyman Services, a Class A Contractor and the area's leader in painting, handyman and remodeling services. Call 434-817-7222 or go to www.advantagehandy.com.