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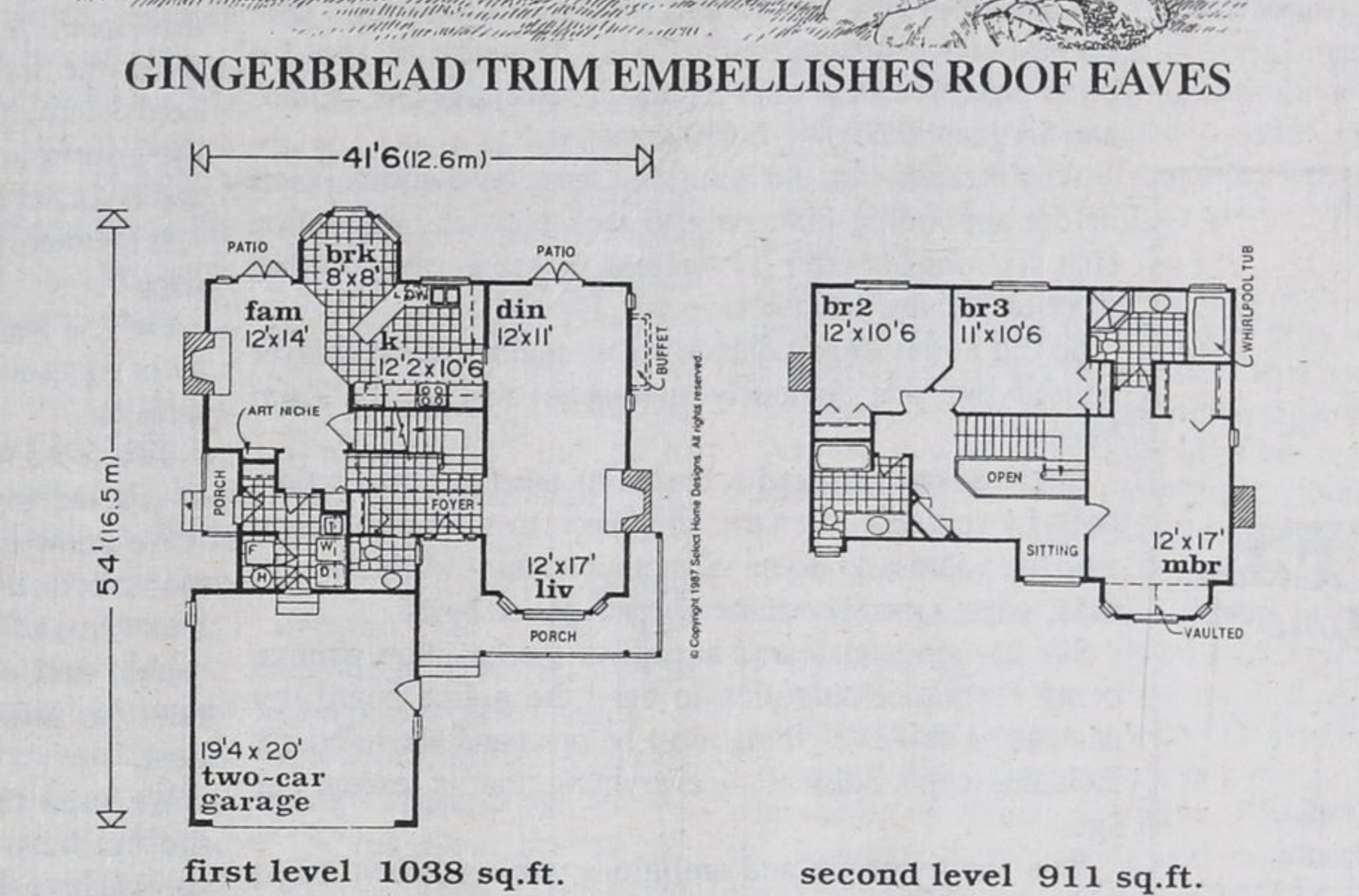
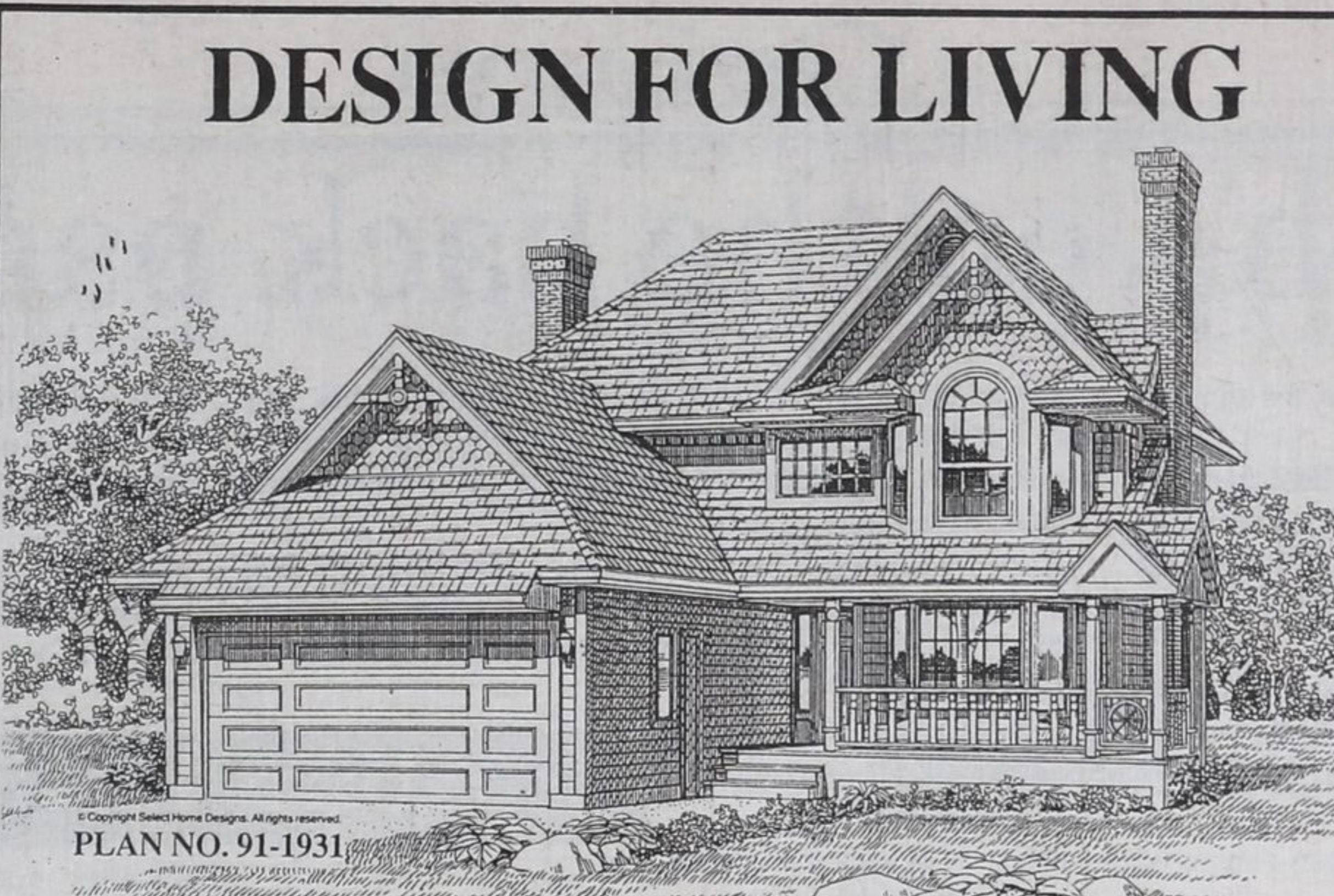
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Railed gallery views the foyer below and offers a sitting area outside of the master bedroom.

Plans include crawlspace and basement foundations for added flexibility.

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Preparing Your Home For Resale

by Hugh Hardy

A few years ago, I wrote a column in this paper with the above title "Preparing Your Home for Resale". This column was very well received, so it seems appropriate - this being Spring and the traditional selling season - to re-work that column and add a few of the things that I have learned since then. It frequently happens that homes do not fetch the prices they should, not because they aren't good homes, but because owners are not always aware of how to prepare for resale. Here are some of the things that a prospective seller can do to have his/her home show in the best light and therefore command the best price.

Show A Clean, Tidy, Well-lit, Fresh-Smelling Home
 It's amazing how far elbow grease will go in selling a home. A neat and tidy home will always sell before a similar home that is messy - and usually for more money. Make sure all the lights are on in the house for showings. Don't forget to change the kitty litter!

Maintain The Exterior Of The Home And The Grounds
 A well kept exterior and grounds is an advertisement for the property. First impressions count!

Paint & Steam
 This is an inexpensive way to completely transform the look of your house for the better. Soiled or chipped paint should be re-coated with fresh paint - preferably in light, neutral colours. Don't use dark paint - it tends to make a rooms look darker and smaller. Torn or dirty wallpaper should be replaced or better yet, removed, then walls repainted. I found that wallpaper is very much a matter of personal taste and therefore stands more of a chance of harming the look of the house for certain people. Borders are fine when used sparingly. The next step is to rent a steam cleaner from the supermarket and clean the carpets. The cost of daily rental is quite reasonable. The combined effect of freshly painted walls and like-new carpets really adds to the resale value of a home.

Basements and Garages
 And ingenious and inexpensive trick to make your basement and garage look great is to paint the concrete floors with concrete paint. Then neatly stack or shelve all stored items. These two suggestions should make things look 100% better.

Negative Features
 One negative feature can spoil the look of a home. If you can spend a few hundred dollars to replace that worn out linoleum in the kitchen of your otherwise immaculate home, it can bring a larger financial return - as well as improving the ease of sale. The average home only has one or two negative features - it is important to correct these.

Maximize The Number of Bedrooms
 The disadvantage of making an extra-large master bedroom out of two smaller bedrooms, for example, is that it limits the market for your home. In a case like this, it is often better to return the home to its original state when selling.

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