

Home Newsletter

OCTOBER 2020



Add value to your home with a \$2,500 budget

With a budget of \$2,500, there is a fair bit you can do in a home when it comes to giving it a fresh, new look. If you are planning to sell soon, maybe prioritise the kitchen and bathroom as these rooms can make or break a sale. Here are a few suggestions of budget-friendly renovations or upgrades you could consider for your home.

Revive your kitchen

You don't need to go full throttle to revive your kitchen. Start by taking care of the floor by installing the tiles you have been craving or replace with vinyl floors, which are budget-friendly and waterproof.

Swapping cabinet doors can give your kitchen a real facelift. If you prefer to spend your budget on other features, then you can simply replace the handles of your cupboards and drawers and give them a fresh coat of paint.

You can also refresh of your benchtops, not all are expensive and replacing them will really transform your kitchen. You can find laminate benchtops, the most cost-effective material, under \$150 per square metre, and it works wonders if you choose the right colour and design.

Transform your bathroom

To renovate and modernise the bathroom without spending too much time or money, you also have the option of simply repainting it. A brushstroke and your bathroom will appear transformed.

After helping Australians with their homes for over 90 years, we understand life can sometimes get in the way of both the little and large renovation projects. That is why we are giving you the chance to win 1 of 7 renovation vouchers valued \$2,500 each (T&Cs apply). All you need to do is get a free property appraisal from your local LJ Hooker agent during spring. Entries close on 30 November, so book your appraisal today to ensure you are in the running!

Consider replacing your vanity, shower screen and shower head, and upgrade lighting fixtures to make your bathroom look new. Also, think about installing a big, new mirror to enhance the feeling of spaciousness.

Don't forget the power of decorating; a few scented candles, ornaments and plants can help create an atmosphere of luxury.

Make your home 'smart'

A budget of \$2,500 might not allow you to get the most advanced set-up available today, but it is more than sufficient to take the first few steps in making your home smart.

You can start with a smart lock. It can automatically lock the front door when you go out and unlock when you return. Not only does this feature make your home safer, but it is also very practical.

Once you step inside the house, smart lights are a nice feature to have. They turn on and off, dim, and you can program them by creating scenes. These are pre-set configurations for different scenarios, such as "movie night", "romantic", "wake up", etc. Smart thermostats can work the exact same way.

Priorities will vary depending on your needs and preferences. Nonetheless, making your home smarter will definitely help it stand out and give you an edge on the competition when selling.



Win a share of \$17,500 today by booking a **free property appraisal** with your local real estate expert.

ljhooker.com.au/property-appraisal



Outdoor space for family fun

With many of us preparing for a staycation this Christmas, why not create a fun outdoor space to get the kids off the technology and keen to play outside.

Designing a child-friendly garden is a clever way to encourage outdoor play. And with myriad play apparatus choices available, from cubbyhouses, swings and slides to sand pits, monkey bars and a rock-climbing wall, creating an outdoor play area is easy.

Ideally, outdoor play areas should be designed to blend in with your house or any outdoor structure such as a pergola or gazebo rather than be the first thing that is seen. To make play areas less obvious, it's recommended you position them to one side of the backyard. Of course, the location and visibility of the play area will be determined by the age of the children who will use it. It's also important to look at the traffic flow around any play structure, whether it's a playhouse, cubby or swing set, and make sure it fits in with your landscape design.



When it comes to play areas, the size of your yard need not be an issue; all it takes is some clever thinking. In small outdoor spaces, the key is to make some parts multi-functional. That way, when the kids aren't playing, the space can be used by adults. For example, you can integrate a timber daybed in a sandpit and have a removable lid on rollers embedded in the deck.

Providing a patch of lawn where the kids can play with the dog, play ball games, pitch a tent or ride bikes is a great idea. You might also like to include an area of long grass for stalking games, a wildlife pool for discovery, a vegie patch so kids can have the fun of watching what they plant grow or include butterfly and bird attracting plants so kids can enjoy getting in touch with nature.

If you have established trees, make good use of them by creating a tyre swing or a tree house. If you have the space and the resources you could include something like an outdoor chess set, which kids and adults can play with.

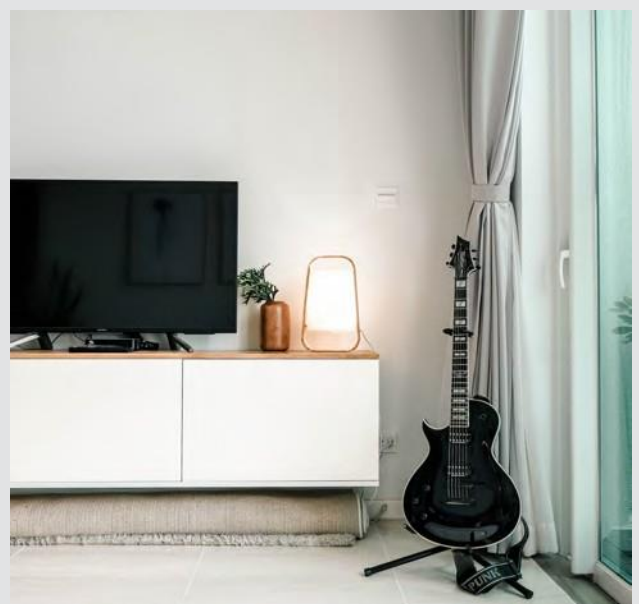
Ultimately, the key is to create something that will appeal to the age of your children, something adaptable that can evolve as the children grow and your family's needs change, and something that encourages interaction and sparks the imagination. Get that right and it will be playtime all the time.



Save energy, save costs: Part 4 – Living room

Want to know how you can lower your environmental impact, save money and increase your comfort at home? There are many simple, inexpensive ways to reduce a home's energy and water use. To make it easier, this 'Save energy, save money' series will give you some useful tips.

1. Turn appliances off at the power point when not in use, as many appliances such as TVs, stereos and computers use electricity called "standby power" when not being used if they're left switched on at the power point. Standby power can account for as much as 10% of household energy bills.
2. Choose an energy efficient monitor with LED backlighting. All monitors come with an energy rating so you can see how much energy a specific monitor will be likely to use over the course of a year.
3. A simple rule of thumb is the bigger the TV, the more energy it will use so don't supersize it. LED backlit LCD TVs are extremely energy efficient. When purchasing a new TV, always consider the energy efficiency rating.



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