

# Carol's Corner



*Your Real  
Estate Resource*

## First-Time Home Buyer Video Series

Realtor.com® has developed a five-part video series that will provide first-time buyers an informative and humorous look at the stages of the purchase cycle. The series is hosted by actress Elizabeth Banks and titled "The Home-Buying Process in Plain English with Elizabeth Banks". Our newsletter will feature the episodes as they become available. Here is the third episode, which talks about mortgage lending—[click here](#) to view it. You will notice several of the articles in this month's newsletter are focused on home improvement projects and timing the market. Be sure to [email me](#) and let me know what you think of the video series and of course I will be happy to answer any questions you have about buying or selling your home!

### Autumn Projects: 5 Great Ideas to Improve Your Home

Are you spending too much time and money making the wrong renovations to your home? If you are like most homeowners, it can be hard to know which projects ultimately add the most value. Fortunately, [there is online guidance](#) detailing which improvements show the greatest return on investment. Before you start tearing down walls and ripping up floors, take a look at this list of 5 renovations that will likely boost your home's value this fall!

#### #1: Roof Replacement

Of the top five value-adding renovations listed by the cost-value ratio report, roof replacement led the way. Its value rose nearly 6% from 2014 to 2015. This renovation falls right in line with all of other improvements that made gains over the last year - fixing the necessities.

#### #2: Garage Door Replacement

This year it is clear that the trend is toward making repairs and replacements that add value to the overall function and security of the home. Replacing old wood garage doors with new and technologically advanced garage doors improved its return on investment by more than five and a half percent over the year.

#### #3: Steel Door Entry

Adding a steel door entry made nearly as much of an increase in value as garage door replacements. Up in value by 5.4% over the year, replacing your front door with a more secure 20-gauge steel door is a great renovation for this fall. The more expensive fiberglass replacement entry door was the only high value renovation that made gains.

#### #4: Siding Replacement

Though it is easy to clean with a good power washer, vinyl siding is often considered of lower quality compared to some of the other materials available today. Instead, stone veneers are taking the place of vinyl siding. This improvement was only second to steel doors in ROI. The cost-value report showed a more than 3% increase in value for replacing vinyl siding.

#### #5: Wood Window Replacement

Similar to vinyl siding replacement, wood windows are not as durable as some of the sturdier contemporary windows. That is why wood window replacements are high on the report for value adding renovations.



**392 Armour Rd, Avon Lake**  
3 Bedrooms \* 2 Baths \* Sun Room  
Finished Rec Room \* 2 Car Garage

[More Details](#) \* [See It](#)



**32506 Gurs Road; Avon Lake**

One Owner Home \* 4 Bedrooms  
Updated \* Gourmet Kitchen \* Deck

[More Details](#) \* [See It](#)

### [This Month In Real Estate](#)

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## Is This September the Perfect Month to Buy a Home?

It's the perennial question, and one that both consumers and the media have asked me incessantly over the past few weeks: When is the best time of year to buy a home?

The question inspired me to look at the seasonal patterns for supply and demand a couple of weeks ago, revealing the upper hand that buyers who are willing to close on a home in off-peak times like the fall and winter might have.

But upon closer inspection I found this: September could be the best month all year to sign a contract to buy a home. Why? Multiple factors are coming together to make this September unique.

The first factor is **supply**. Buyers will now have more choices than they have had for the past 10 months. According to our daily survey of visitors to [realtor.com](http://realtor.com)<sup>®</sup>, the single biggest factor holding back buyers from making a purchase all year long has been the inability to find a home that meets their needs. That's because both existing- and new-home supply has been tight all year. Happily, listings inventory on [realtor.com](http://realtor.com) has been growing all spring and summer, a pattern that continued into August. As of the third week in August, inventory was at 1.91 million units, up 3% from July and up 21% from January.

Normally inventory peaks in August and begins to slow as the nights grow longer. But this year the typical seasonal decline will start a bit later. There will be more choices in September than any other month in 2015.

The second factor is **demand**. Now that school has started, demand has already started to decline. You can see the evidence in the nonseasonally adjusted pending home sales data reported by the National Association of Realtors<sup>®</sup> last week. The nonseasonal estimated number of new contract signings in July was down 12% from June. This kind of decline is entirely normal for July, since most contracts signed in July won't close until after school starts.

And, of course, with less competition for the most listings all year, pricing power weakens as inventory takes longer to sell.

The seasonal pattern to pricing and median age of inventory tells us that the best deals come in the dead of winter. Signing a contract in September will likely mean you could close before Thanksgiving. That means September buyers won't have as much moving hassle from winter weather, since for most of the country the threat of snow and ice picks up in December.

The third, and final, factor: the **current low level of mortgage rates**. Thirty-year fixed rates ended last week under 4% as a result of the recent stock market declines—sometimes a little turbulence in one area stabilizes others.

Why pay more later when you can pay less today? The average 30-year fixed rate touched 4.2% in June but has since pulled back and danced around 4%. Rates are likely to be closer to that June peak by the end of the year. So signing a contract to buy a home soon would enable buyers to lock in today's lower rates before they start their long-awaited ascent. With low rates, more choices, less competition, lower prices, and the chance to move before "harsh winter" enters our regular vocabulary again—this September sounds pretty enticing, especially if you're ready and have been looking but unable to buy so far this year.

**We are working hard  
to list and sell  
all of your referrals!**



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If you have a brokerage relationship with another agency this is not intended as a solicitation. All information deemed reliable, but not guaranteed.

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## 5 DIY Projects Under \$1000 You Can Do This Weekend

Your home is your refuge, and it's important to take stock occasionally and consider some improvements, even if you are not planning to sell. Home improvement projects don't have to break the bank or take weeks of your time. There are plenty of projects you can handle yourself in just a weekend. Here are 5 suggestions that are all smart improvements and will not cost more than \$1,000.

### No. 1: Freshen Up Your Entry

If the first sight that meets your eyes when you arrive home is a tired front door with zero curb appeal, it's time to freshen things up. An inviting entrance makes the whole house better, and it's not hard to create.

Decide whether you need to replace your front door entirely. It's often enough to apply fresh paint and hardware to your existing door. Consider putting your house number on the door, and adding an attractive, updated light fixture. Depending on the space, you might consider adding some flowers or greenery in an attractive planter, some comfortable seating, or a colorful doormat.

### No. 2: Update Lighting

Changing out light fixtures is a quick DIY project that instantly improves the look of a room. Create a harmonious feel by selecting fixtures that complement each other and your home's overall style.

For under-illuminated areas, add a handsome table or floor lamp. Overhead lighting can be too harsh for most rooms, so make your home comfortable and functional. If you're on a really tight budget, try spray-painting some of your existing fixtures.

### No. 3: Modernize the Bathroom

The bath is a great place to look for a quick project, and modernizing this small space can be easy and fast. Even if you need to hire a plumber for some jobs, you can still get a lot done for under \$1,000.

You can put in a beautiful new vanity within this budget. Or maybe you just need to update the hardware. Put sleek stainless pulls on drawers and cabinets, add a wonderful new showerhead for your morning drench. These small improvements add up to big impact.

### No. 4: Replace Kitchen Hardware

You'll be amazed at the difference you can make in your kitchen by just changing the cabinet and drawer hardware. The cabinetry makes up the bulk of your kitchen space, so this change is really dramatic. You'll find hardware in a huge range of styles and price points. Look at your favorite home store, or shop online.

### No. 5: Add Storage

As George Carlin famously said, your home is a "place for your stuff." So this weekend why not create an attractive place for your stuff? Adding shelving is a very doable DIY project that will come in well under \$1,000. You can create your own shelves or buy them ready to hang for under \$100. Then choose some of your favorite "stuff" and put it on display!



It's been a busy month and it's just at the half way point! We need listings! Homes are selling FAST! Take a look at the newsletter and call us if we can list your home!



22 Campus Court, \* Avon Lake

2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths \* Large Kitchen  
Lots of Natural Light \* 55+ Active  
Community [More Details](#) \* [See It](#)



19173 State Route 301; Largange

2 Bedrooms \* 1 Bath \* 2.27 Acres \*  
Outbuildings \* Security System \* Pool

[More Details](#) \* [See It](#)



10900 Vernon Ave; Garfield Heights

3 Bedrooms \* 2 Baths \* Updated  
Oversized 2 Car Garage \* New Carpet

[More Details](#) \* [See It](#)

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