



Katrina Edwards

**Broker/Consultant
Triumph Property Services**

www.TriumphPS.com
530 Lytton Ave, 2nd Floor
Palo Alto, CA 94301
650-813-1413
katrina@TriumphPS.com
www.TriumphPS.com

5 Fast, Easy, and Budget-Friendly Upgrades for Your Home

From a fresh coat of paint to brand new fixtures, updating your home doesn't have to cost a fortune.

Whether you're looking to sell your home or just freshen it up, here are 5 fast, easy, and budget-friendly upgrades for your home.

Paint it to sell...or to keep

A fresh coat of paint can completely transform a room. With thousands of shades to choose from, it can be overwhelming trying to find one that fits the space and your personality. Why not narrow it down to colors that not only look great but can increase your home's value? A recent 2017 Paint Color Analysis examined over 32,000 photos of homes all over the country and found that two specific colors increased the home's value by an average of \$5,440: light blue and pale gray.

Install a smart thermostat

Smart thermostats help control energy consumption, lower your utility bills and give your home that "techie" vibe. With a WIFI signal, smart thermostats can be controlled from anywhere with your smart phone. This simple upgrade can make your life more comfortable and convenient.

A little landscaping

Enhancing curb appeal adds a great deal of value to your home and can be addressed at any price point. First impressions matter! Buyers want a home exterior that screams *wow*, especially when 63% of homebuyers will stop by a house after viewing it online. Planting some new flowers, adding a splash of color to your front door, or even upgrading your mailbox can lure in the most discerning buyer.

Update your hardware

Switch things up with a little cosmetic fix. Replace outdated cabinet handles, door knobs, pulls, and rods in each room for a fresh new look. This is an inexpensive improvement that requires minimal effort and a small budget.

Enhance your lighting

Install a Dimmer Switch to have more control over the ambiance of your home and set a different tone for each room. We recommend using energy-efficient light bulbs since they tend to last longer and save you money on your electricity bill. A TCP 60 Watt Equivalent can save you an Average Of \$678. We recommend using a licensed electrician.

May Calendar

5/01 - May Day

5/13 - Mother's Day

5/19 - Armed Forces Day

5/28 - Memorial Day

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Prep Your Home for Fire Season

Install and test smoke alarms. They should be on every level of your home and outside each sleeping area.

Check your fire extinguishers. Install high on the wall, near an exit, and away from children and all heat sources.

Check wiring and outlets. Check all electrical cords to make sure they're not fraying. If you're unsure about the capacity of your home's electrical system, contact a licensed electrician.

Keep your clothes dryer clean. Prevent dryer fires by cleaning the lint filter before and after every load of laundry.

Protect your roof. Wood shingles are the most flammable roof material but can be treated with a fire retardant or a rooftop sprinkler system.

Keep debris away from your home. Firewood, propane tanks, and building materials should be kept at least 30 feet from your home's exterior.

Remember to create an evacuation plan.



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Lemon Icebox Pie

Here is an easy, no-bake recipe, perfect for your Memorial Day gathering.

Ingredients

For the Crust:

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs (10 to 12 whole crackers)

1/4 cup packed light or dark brown sugar

Pinch of salt

6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

For the Filling:

8 oz cream cheese, softened

1 can (14 oz) sweetened condensed milk

1/2 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 tablespoon grated lemon peel

Directions:

1. In medium bowl, mix Crust ingredients. Press evenly into ungreased 9-inch pie plate. Refrigerate 1 hour.

2. In large bowl, beat Filling ingredients until smooth. Spread evenly in crust. Refrigerate 4 hours but no longer than 8 hours.

3. Serve with whipped cream.



Photo & recipe courtesy of bettycrocker.com
<https://fnhw.us/2ECuQak>