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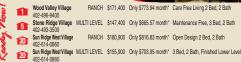
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Eight sure signs it's remodeling time

such as oak cabinetry, can peg a room design to a specific decade. When updating, "Think about your own tastes, and pursue a classic style" that will stand the test of time, Jernigan said.

APPLIANCES KEEP UP A STEADY HUM

It's not just that a noisy refrigerator or dishwasher is amonying. Newer appliances don't make noise, so if yours do, it probable means they predate today's energy-efficiency standards.

From a return on investment perspective, "it just makes sense to replace older appliances with Energy Star-tade models, which can result in energy savings of up to 50 percent," said Shirley Hood, a sales representative at Abt Electronics and Appliances in Glenview, Illinois reezer, veggies freezing in the crisper and longer oven preheating and cooking times also are signs that your appliances are showing their age. Simply replacing older appliances "rotally transforms a kitchen" without breaking the bank or breaking down walls, Hood said.

YOU HAVE LIVING AND FAMILY ROOMS

APPLIANCES KEEP UP A STEADY HUM

By DAWN KLINGENSMITH

When it comes to diving into a home remodeling project, homeowners take their time. Often, a long, long time. Procrastination seems to come with the territory. Of about 7,000 people who shared detailed kitchen remodel plans on the home design website Houzz last year, just one-third had actually taken the first step. Before some recalcitrant remodelers can bring themselves to gene-light a project. The properties of the programment of the programme

runings are interaity failing apart and they vereached the point where they simply cannot stand their surroundings, said Pamela Martin Johnston, senior designer with Jackson Design and Remodeling in San Diego. It's a sure sign that the time has come to remodel the kitchen or bathroom, she said, when homeowners want to 'take a siedge-hammer to it themselves.' There are less drastic indications that the

time is right.

Here are eight reasons to pull the trigger on an upgrade before the urge strikes to brandish a sledgehammer.

COLORS OR MATERIALS SCREAM A PAST DECADE

APAST DECADE

If stepping into the kitchen or bath is like entering a time warp, you or a previous homeowner probably "got sucked into a trend whose time has passed," said interior designer S. A. "Sam" Jernigan of Renaissance Design Consultations in Grass Valley, California, Webesser, but a talkina.



Make sure you're finding the right house for you — for the long haul

Considering that a home

Considering that a home likely is the most important purchase and biggest financial transaction you'll ever make, it's important that you be happy with that acquisition. However, results of a recent study by Redfin Corp. in Washington, D.C., indicated that one-fourth of U.S. homeowners who nurchased the home they one-fourth of U.S. homeowners who purchased the home they currently reside in would not buy the home if they could do it all over again.

Marshall Park, a real estate agent for Redfin, said there are a few common reasons.

"First, many feel they paid too much for their home, which can easily hapnen when they're

can easily happen when they're competing in a bidding war and prices are escalating," Park said

said.
"Second, many feel they bought the wrong house. With so little inventory on the market and bidding wars common, it's easy to get swept up in the fremzy when five other people want the same house you're looking at or when the limited options of homes to choose from gets freats and the said, many buyers Third, he said, many buyers



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which underscores the impor-tance of choosing an agent you can trust to look out for your best interests and guide you through the process. Zachary D. Schorr, a real estate attorney in Los Angeles, said other common reasons

Carol Olrich, a broker associ ate with Alain Pinel Realtors ir Marin County, California, said Marin County, California, said it's wise to continually review priorities, ask plenty of ques-tions of the seller and listing agent, and study the neighbor-hood carefully prior to writing the offer.

Also, don't let negative reactions from friends and family let you second-guess your decision.

your decision.

"I ask my buyers to focus on what is right for them and try not to listen to unconstructive, negative dialogue," Olrich said.

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