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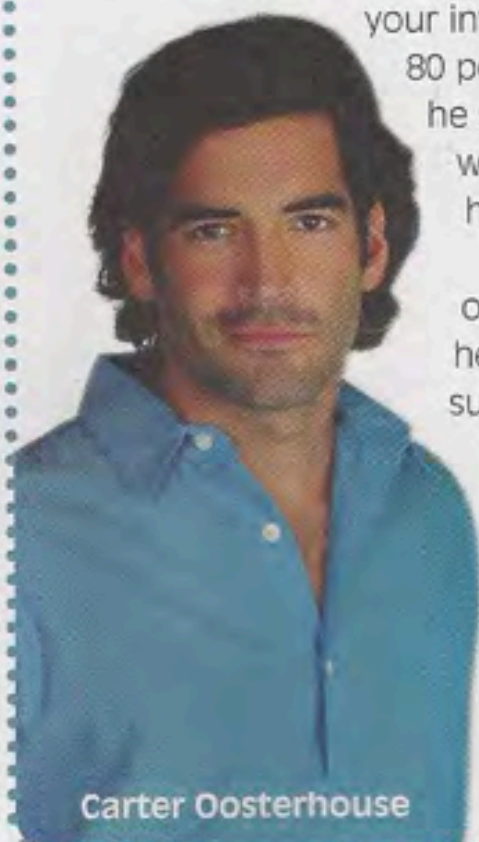
REMODEL FOR VALUE, OOSTERHOUSE SAYS

Remodeling projects that are meant to renovate your finances by increasing your home's value have to be timed correctly, cautions home-improvement guru Carter Oosterhouse, who is the author of "Carter's Way" and the host of four HGTV shows, including "Carter Can." Oosterhouse says that if you undertake a remodeling to increase your home's value, you should plan to sell 1–2 years after the remodeling is finished.

"That's when you're going to get the best value or your return on your investment," he explains. "Usually, that is about 80 percent to 90 percent on the dollar." Any longer, he says, and your improvements start to show wear and tear. Also, better products likely will have hit the market by then.

If your remodeling involves changing flooring or moving walls, you should pad your budget, he says, because "hidden" costs pop up during such projects. "You see maybe your flooring system, your foundation, your studs, your framing is not as solid as you would like," and you have to upgrade those, too, he says.

Oosterhouse, who has performed at least 500 remodeling projects for TV, says smaller projects, such as a wood deck, generally get you more money back than do big-bucks changes, such as installing cherry cabinets.



Carter Oosterhouse