

LIFESTYLE ► HOME & GARDEN



Home improvements guide: The 8 best projects to enhance life after 50

By [Chloe Lay](#) · 9 min read

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Want to make changes to your home but don't know where to begin? It's easy to see why. From a quick lick of paint to a full-on extension, there are many ways to improve your home and make it more stylish and welcoming. So take a look at these eight home improvement projects and get inspired.

- Carrying out some home improvements is a great way to turn your house into the home of your dreams
- Our 50s and 60s are a great time to make changes to your home, as we tend to have more time on our hands after our children move out
- From easy changes like redecorating to more considerable changes like getting an extension, there are so many ways you can change your home
- Making a few home improvements can increase your quality of life, but it could add value to your property, too – it's a win-win!

Home improvements: FAQs

What are some of the most common home improvements?

You can make all sorts of improvements to your house or home, from a quick coat of paint to a full-blown extension. Some of the most common home improvements include upgrading bathrooms or kitchens, loft conversions, replacing windows and redecorating. You can do some of these yourself using [DIY](#), but you'll need a team of professionals for others.

Which home improvements add the most value to a property?

Most types of [home improvement](#) can add value to your property. But if you're really looking to boost the price of your house, you'll want to focus on changes that could save a buyer money in the long run. Improving your home's insulation is a great way to do this – switch out your old windows for double glazing and seal off any drafts.

Do new doors increase a home's value?

Getting a new front door could undoubtedly increase the value of your property. [Research published in Ideal Home](#) suggests that even just painting your door the right colour could increase the value of your home by up to £4,000. That's an easy bit of DIY with a great return on investment!

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Our 50s, 60s and beyond can be an ideal time to make home improvements.

[Maybe the kids have left home](#), and you've got a bit more time to take stock of what needs doing. Perhaps the mortgage has finally been paid off, and you've got a bit of extra cash in your pocket. Maybe you've moved into a new home, and you feel like it doesn't quite suit you. Or perhaps retirement has given you more time to notice bugbears around the house, things you don't want to put up with anymore.

Whatever your reasons, adaptations to a property are nearly always a good idea. Even small changes can help you turn four walls into the home you've always wanted.

Whether you want to spruce up a couple of rooms by redecorating or go the whole hog and get an extension, there are many ways to improve your home's look (and increase its value!).

Keep reading to see our top eight ways to revamp and renovate your home

Why bother with home improvements?

There are many reasons homeowners want to make improvements or adjustments to their homes.

The home of your dreams

One of the most obvious benefits is that you'll get to enjoy living in a nicer place, whatever that may mean for you. So whether you want to create more space, ensure a more relaxing environment, or make it a bit more *you*, updating and upgrading your house is a brilliant way to improve your quality of life.

Added value

Another huge benefit to home improvements is that they can add value to your home. It doesn't matter if the changes you're making are big or small – even something as simple as [repainting your front door](#) could increase your property's resale value. So if you think you might sell up in the future, make some changes now – you'll be glad you did when you put it on the market.

Improved accessibility

But home improvements aren't just about making your home better *now*. As we get older, it's also important to start thinking about [accessibility issues](#) that may arise with age. If you're thinking about making some changes, it's a good idea to consider accessibility at the same time as style and space. For example, you could replace your bannister with something sturdier or install an easy-access shower in your bathroom. Small changes like this can make a big difference.

Top 8 ideas for home improvements

Now that we know *why* you should make some changes to your house, let's look at the changes you can make.

1. Get an extension

One of the most impactful improvements you can make to a property is to get an extension. It's probably the best option if you're looking to increase your living area, and it's easy to tailor the new space to your precise wants or needs.

However, an extension is a pretty big job, so there are a few things you'll want to consider before you take the plunge.

First up, think carefully about if you'll need planning permission for your dream extension. The [UK Government](#) advises contacting your local planning authority to find out if you'll need to get planning permission. Then, if necessary, take the appropriate steps and remember to factor in enough time to hear back about your application – it can take up to 13 weeks.

Once that's done, it's also worth setting out a comprehensive budget for the work, including the cost of fitters and workmanship. Remember, it's a good idea to set aside more money than you think you'll need in case things go wrong!

Finally, consider the timing of your extension. Having work like this done means you'll likely lose access to parts of your home for a while; it can be disruptive and just plain annoying! So think carefully about whether this is the right time to uproot your life.

It might sound like a pain, but in the end, you'll have a bespoke space tailored to your exact specification, so it's 100% worth it!

2. Convert your garage

Don't fancy going the whole hog with an extension? Consider a garage conversion instead. This is a simpler way of increasing your home's living area. You can convert a garage into a living room, a dining room, a home office, or anything else you might want.

One of the best things about a garage conversion is that you won't usually need planning permission since you aren't adding any surface area to the property. You can simply smarten up the space, and you're done.

If you don't need more living space, you can also tidy up the garage to increase your home's value. Organise the space into a smart storage area, and get some new garage doors to make it look shiny and new. It couldn't be easier.

3. Add a conservatory or orangery

Adding a conservatory or an orangery to your house is a great way to get more light indoors. They're less effort and upheaval than a full extension but can make a massive difference to the layout and style of your home.

With a light, bright conservatory, you can bring the outdoors in and enjoy gazing out at your garden all year round, even if the Great British weather lives up to its reputation!

If you're unsure if it would work in your space, you could ask for a no-obligation quote and an overview from a provider before you commit.

4. Replace your windows

If your property is more than 15 or 20 years old, replacing your windows might be a good idea. New windows, particularly double glazing, are usually more environmentally friendly than older ones, as they're better at keeping the heat in and the cold out.

Therefore, replacing windows can be a great way to [keep warm in the winter](#) and potentially reduce your energy costs. They can be a significant expense upfront, but you could save money overall.

If you need help finding the right fitter, look at [FENSA](#). FENSA is a government-approved scheme with a list of approved window and door providers. They also provide advice and information on getting replacement windows, so you can have peace of mind that you're in safe hands.

5. Install a new kitchen or bathroom

Updating your kitchen or bathroom (or both!) is a brilliant way to upgrade your home. It can make your house feel brand new.

Keen cooks dream of a functional but beautiful kitchen with plenty of surface space for kitchen machinery – and let's be honest, we *all* want a beautiful bathroom. So visit a showroom and talk to a designer to create a space that will suit your exact needs.

Remember that this type of job can be disruptive – you probably won't be able to get into your kitchen or use the loo for at least a couple of months. To deal with this, you just need to be prepared. For example, if you're doing up your kitchen, stock up on [frozen food](#) and move the microwave into a different room, so you don't go hungry.

6. Fix dodgy guttering

A slightly less glamorous – but equally important – aspect of home improvement is tackling any worn, broken or old guttering. For many of us, this is one of those jobs that feels like too much hassle to bother with, but it's so important, especially in the winter when rain levels can be high.

For some people, fixing up the guttering can be a simple matter of clearing it of any clogged up leaf debris. However, if you notice any cracks, fractures or sagging areas, it's probably time to replace it. So get up on a ladder and look for areas of damp, water stains or mould – these are usually [tell-tale signs](#) that it's time to get new guttering.

While you're up there, take a look at the condition of your roof and siding. Fascias and soffits usually last years, but if they're cracked or damaged, this can cause considerable problems in the long run.

7. Redecorate

Redecorating can be a simple but very effective way to improve your home dramatically, whether you want to give your home a whole new style or just want to smarten up what's already there.

From a fresh coat of paint or some trendy wallpaper to new carpets or a new layout, there are many ways to improve your home without too much inconvenience. Look online for decoration inspiration, then pop your [DIY](#) hat on and get to work!

8. Buy new furniture

If you're looking to improve your home but don't want to uproot your life while you do it, why not just get some new furniture? This is an easy way to give each room in your house a little boost.

High-quality products and furnishings can make an enormous difference to the overall look and feel of a home. For example, a [Chesterfield sofa](#) in the living room will give your home a touch of luxury and style. Not to mention, they're incredibly comfortable!

Deck out your house with plush furnishings, and you'll feel like you've got a whole new place.

Home improvements: Turning your house into a home

Making changes to your house or home might feel like a big job, but it doesn't have to be. If you don't feel you need a full-on extension, don't get one; start small instead, with a quick bit of redecorating or some new furniture. Once you get the DIY bug, you might just feel ready to tackle a bigger project.



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