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# N AMY Shair's TRIANGLE NEWSLETTER

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## Home Improvement Projects With Top-Dollar Returns

Your home is in the perfect location but the home itself may not be as perfect as you'd like. You're ready to start making it just right for you. Where should you be going? Which project will bring you joy and add as much home equity as possible.

The "Remodeling Impact Report" from the National Association of Realtors has tons of data on how much improvements cost and how much you could recoup on those costs.

Here are a few of the reports best remodeling projects:

**New Roof:** If you find yourself gathering buckets when it starts to sprinkle, a new roof should be your number one project!

**Refinished or New Hardwood Floors:** Hardwood floors are a timeless classic. Refinishing existing hardwoods is a no-brainer. Nor will you regret adding cost effective, low maintenance LVP floors if you have none.

**New Garage Door:** A new garage door provides a big boost for your home's curb appeal. There are many options to choose from too!

**Better Insulation:** Insulation is tucked out of sight, so it's often out of mind—until you're forced to wear your parka indoors because it's so cold. Bonus you save on heating and cooling costs.

**New Siding:** Choose any color and potentially never paint again. Low maintenance vinyl and composite siding (fiber cement) will add to your home's value.

**HVAC Replacement:** Air quality is top of mind these days, so replacing your HVAC system is a timely project. Plus it cuts those pesky utility costs.

If you need a recommendation for a vendor to help with these or any other home projects, give me a call! *Amy*



## Winter Activities in Raleigh

There are many fun things to do in Raleigh during the winter months. North Carolina's City of Oaks has great museums, arcades and awesome places to eat and drink.

Raleigh has some of the best museums in NC. The NC Museum of Natural Sciences has one of the coolest exteriors of any museum. Once inside you find beautifully curated exhibits with creatures many of us know and some you had no clue lived in NC.

Across the promenade is the NC Museum of History which houses exhibits from NC's distant past, present, and future.

NC Museum of Art has an impressive permanent collection and exciting special exhibits that rotate through. There is also a extensive museum park that can be enjoyed on nicer days.

For some family fun check out a college basketball game or NHL's Carolina Hurricanes at PNC Arena. Boxcar Bar + Arcade has over 100 classic and modern arcade games.

Raleigh's food scene is hard to top. Grab a bite at the Morgan Street Food Hall with almost every type of food present and many local breweries to sample.

## Make Your House Brighter This Winter

Who hasn't used the cooler weather as an excuse to binge-watch Netflix while snuggled in a blanket on the couch. But come January, staying indoors can feel less like a treat and more like living in a cave. Here's how to make your house lighter and brighter with more natural light indoors.

**Take the Screens Off Your Windows:** You'll get 30% more sunlight shining indoors without screens on your windows. Sunlight warms your rooms and saves money on your heating bill. Make sure to store the screens where they won't get damaged. You will want to replace them in the spring to keep the sun out and run your cooling system less.

**Change Your Bulbs:** Replace your incandescent bulbs and their yellowy light with LEDs, which produce a brighter, whiter light. The higher the K rating on the bulb, the cooler and whiter its light. For cool, white light, opt for a bulb rated 3,500K to 4,100K. For blue-white light that is closet to natural daylight use a bulb between 5,000K and 6,500K.

**Add Mirrors:** Make the most of winter light by bouncing it around the room with mirrors.



## MARKET WATCH

Usually we have a slowing of the market between November and February but our market is not slowing down here in the Triangle! We still have fewer homes for sale than we need and buyers are still making multiple offers before getting a home. Prices are expected to appreciate this year but not as sharply as 2021. While mortgage interest rates are expected to increase, that will put continued pressure on people to make their moves sooner rather than later. New construction is continuing throughout the area giving options for buyers willing to live in the suburbs. Working with me will ensure that clients will get the best deal possible, whether they are selling or buying.

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## 7 Hacks You Can Do Now to Make House Cleaning Go Faster

Stained surfaces, carpets and stinky appliances—they all hurt your home's market value in the end. And, they're no fun to look at every day, either. Get your house back together quickly with these easy hacks using items you most likely already have!

1. **Kitty Litter for Oil Spills:** Oil spills on the garage floor are unsightly, but are easy to clean with kitty litter. Pour some on, let it sit for at least 30 mins, and then sweep it up.
2. **Nail Polish to Stop Rust Rings:** If metal cans of shaving cream leave rings on your sinks or tubs, paint the bottoms with clear nail polish. Now there is a layer of protection.
3. **Alcohol to Remove Nail Polish from Carpet:** Nail polish on the carpet can be a bigger moment of panic than a red wine spill. Some rubbing alcohol and a microfiber cloth will make cleanup a synch.
4. **Rubber Gloves for Pet Hair:** Are you tired of pet hair on carpet and upholstery? Run a rubber glove over the hair, the glove creates static, so the hair clings to the latex. Wash the glove off and use it again and again.
5. **Lemon for Stained, Stinky Microwaves:** Pour half a cup of water into a bowl. Slice a lemon and squeeze the juice into the water, put the lemon in the bowl. Microwave the bowl for three minutes, then let it sit for five minutes. Remove the bowl and wipe down the microwave. Super easy!
6. **Car Wax for the Stovetop:** Next time you clean your metal stovetop, give your future self a break. Buff a small amount of car wax onto the metal surface. In the same way it works to protect your car it works here. Making future cleanings quick and easy.
7. **Socks to Clean Blinds:** Looking for a easy way to clean a hard to reach area. Slide a sock on your hand, soak in water and then rub your hand over the slats pinching the slat between your thumb and fingers.



### QUIZ QUESTION

What is NC's largest river system?

Be the first person to call in and provide the correct answer and you'll win a prize!

Email [Amy@amyshair.com](mailto:Amy@amyshair.com)

Check out my friend

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## Easy Mistakes Homeowners Make on Their Taxes

As you prepare your tax returns for the last year, be careful not to commit any of these common tax mistakes. Tax professionals say these home-related mistakes can cost you money or bring the IRS to your doorstep.

**Deducting the Wrong Year for Property Taxes:** You take a tax deduction for property tax in the year you actually paid them.

**Confusing Escrow Amount for Actual Taxes Paid:** If your lender escrows funds to pay your property taxes, don't deduct the amount escrowed. Make sure you deduct the exact amount paid on the property tax bill.

**Deducting Points Paid to Refinance:** In many cases, you can deduct in full the points you paid your lender to secure your mortgage. However, if you pay points, you must deduct the points over the life of your new loan.

**Failing to Track Home-Related Expenses:** Common tax mistakes are often of omission: not keeping records. If the IRS comes back to you, don't be scrambling to compile your records. File or scan and store home office and home improvement expenses receipts and other documents as you go.

**Forgetting to Keep Track of Capital Gains:** If you sold your main home last year, don't forget to report capital gains on any profit above the excluded amounts.

If you have questions on your taxes, make sure you contact your tax accountant for their professional advice!