

Look for Products with High Value and Low Cost



How Do You Know it's Time to Replace Your Bakes?

Your car's brakes are one of your most important safety features. So it makes sense to be sure that they are maintained properly. Since brakes wear out as part of normal operation, it's obvious that the worn parts should be identified and replaced as soon as possible. But how can you tell if the parts are worn enough to need replacing?

Your local service technician has the knowledge and the tools to tell you what's needed, but only after the car has been inspected. So how do you know when to bring your car in for service? Some disc brake pads have wear sensors that trigger a "service" light on your dash, or shims that start to make noise when the pads are getting down to the minimum. If you know what you are looking for, you can also check for wear by looking at the outside brake pad on the front wheel, which is visible on most cars.

But rotors don't have the benefits of a warning device, and in the past, they had to be physically examined and measured in order to determine the amount of wear. Fortunately, a new advanced brake rotor from Continental Corporation has been developed to solve this problem.

Built-in wear indicator signals rotor replacement

The ATE PremiumOne® Rotor features a patented RotorLife® wear indicator that provides a quick visual reference of rotor thickness and tells you if replacement is needed. The wear indicator's elliptical grooves are machined into both sides of the rotor face at the minimum discard thicknesses recommended by the original equipment vehicle manufacturer. When these grooves wear out, its time to bring the car in and have the rotor replaced. It's that simple. You can easily see the rotor wear for yourself without having to lift the car or remove the wheels.

The wear indicators do not hurt the rotor's performance in any way. In fact, they actually make it work better, which enhances the performance of your brake system. These wear grooves also serve to dissipate heat and gases, which helps to reduce brake fade and extends the life of your pads.



Families know how important it is to retain the value of their homes, especially when we hear so much about diminishing home values and foreclosures. Still, remodeling is one of the best ways to preserve your home's value and in some parts of the country, homeowners can still recover up to 90 percent of their remodeling costs despite falling home prices. If you're a homeowner who's in the process of remodeling, consider budget-friendly options to get the look you want without breaking the bank. Here are several tips to give you some less expensive options when remodeling.

Kitchen

The countertops are one of the high impact surfaces in your kitchen. While natural stone options like granite and quartz, as well as solid surfaces are alluring, they're expensive and can quickly drain your remodeling budget. Now is a good time to check out a contemporary laminate countertop, which offers luxury looks at a surprisingly low cost when compared to stone. Wilsonart(R) HD High Definition Laminate is available in 43 designs created specifically for heavy use horizontal surfaces like countertops. The deep, rich look and dimensional texture can give your kitchen countertop the look you want without the sacrifice. Custom cabinets, though gorgeous to look at, can also make a significant dent in your budget plan. To get the same look for less, install oversized crown molding on top of stock cabinets to make them "pop." Most people won't notice the difference, and you'll save enough to buy a new appliance or two.

Bathroom

A beautiful, updated bathroom will undoubtedly add value to your home, but it can also be a money pit that sucks away your remodeling dollars due to potentially high material and labor costs. In an effort to cut back, try searching for discounted fixtures like shower heads and faucets at home improvement stores or at online sources like eBay.

Oftentimes, the cost of new luxury-name fixtures

can run between \$500 to \$1000 while mass-market versions may provide the same look for less. Many manufacturers, like Moen and Delta, provide detailed installation instructions so you can save there, too. Those popular glass or decorative nickel knobs and pulls on cabinets and doors can often run as much as \$20 apiece. A better option is oversized hardware -- eight to 12 inches long as opposed to the standard four to five inches -- which gives you a bold look for less.

You can also save money on bathroom countertop surfaces by considering durable laminate instead of stone, which can be stained by cosmetics and cleaners. Another advantage of laminate is that if you decide to change the color scheme of your bathroom in a few years, laminate can be switched out easily and inexpensively.

Family Room

Estimates tell us that adding a family room, as opposed to simply remodeling one, will help a homeowner recoup as much as 80 percent of their original investment at resale. Remember to plan the space by factoring in the size of your family, the ages of your kids (and their friends), and perhaps even the possibility of additions to your immediate family, like grandparents or babies. Some families go as far as taking out walls to improve space, but careful planning and wise furniture positioning can help you avoid drastic changes to the room that tend to drain your budget. If you're handy or can afford to hire a carpenter, built-in shelving and possibly an entertainment/gaming nook are useful and popular additions, and can be painted, stained, or simply covered with laminate to match your decor.

Bedrooms

From a purely practical standpoint, your bedrooms are places for you and your family to sleep and take refuge from the outside world. A master bedroom remodel should reflect an atmosphere of serenity and comfort. It's also the perfect place to install energy efficient windows, which will help keep you cool in the summer, warm in the winter, and allow you to eventually recoup the cost with savings on your monthly energy bill.

Color is typically one of the easiest and most cost effective ways to make a significant change in the look of your bedrooms. Kids' bedrooms can benefit from bright colors and easily washable surfaces. Pick up a pre-fabricated laminate countertop slab and a couple of file cabinets at a local home center to create a simple desk with the look of a custom piece. Wilsonart has a large, cutting-edge collection of colorful laminate patterns that children can easily grow into, in addition to a bevy of designs perfectly crafted for a children's room.

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