

## Fixing Up Your Garage

One of your home's most overlooked features has great potential

Increase its usability and the overall value of the property with one of these upgrades.

The best news of all is that any of them can be done over a single weekend, in some cases as a do-it-yourself project. Even if you have to reach out for help, the upfront investment will be more than worth it – both to you and to any potential buyer down the road.

You'll be securing your property, improving its look and feel, and perhaps even adding to the usable square footage.

### INSTALLING A NEW DOOR

A garage with no door is an invitation for thieves, and a manual door can make for back-breaking work. Consider installing a value-boosting power door to increase security and for added convenience. A professional installer can discuss options, including chain- or belt-operated models. Chain-driven doors are typically more affordable, but they are also louder and must be more reg-



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### REAL ESTATE 101

#### Avoiding Big Mistakes

Be sure that you have enough cash on hand before taking on huge renovations jobs or a house flip. Deposits, material, interest, holding costs, taxes, insurance and utilities can begin to add up, and you don't want to come up short. Investopedia offers some more handy tips at <https://bit.ly/2zWNefR>.

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upfront cost. They'll also discuss design options that will compliment your home.

work projects and car emissions can damage the surface of your garage floor. This is usually more unsightly than structural in nature, but the aesthetic is easily improved. Buff out small scratches and scuffs, using warm water and baking soda to create a paste. Rinse clean after scrubbing. Bigger problems might require commercial cleaning or even a masonry expert. Giving the whole thing a new coat of non-skid paint might be a good idea too – and that's a job you can knock out very quickly.

### POWERING IT UP

Some detached garages lack electricity, making them potentially more dangerous at night – and perhaps more of a target for criminal activity. Wiring them for power isn't typically a job you'd do yourself, unless you're licensed and experienced. Instead, hire a professional electrician to create a well-lit, climate-controlled space for your vehicles, storage, bikes and lawn equipment. You might even choose to finish out the garage for use as an entertainment or office space. This would be the most expensive of the suggested improvements, in particular if the garage is very far from main electrical sources. Ask around and get more than one quote.

### REPAIRING THE FLOOR

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### HOMEWISSE GLOSSARY

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**Amortization:** The repayment of a loan over time. With each payment, there is a the reduction of both principal (the original amount borrowed), plus the interest. SOURCE: MLS.com

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