

What to change? How to change?

Contributed by richart khalil

Expenses, difficulty and impact are factors for your home's improvements which can range from giving your living room a fresh coat of paint, through installing a new kitchen or bathroom. You have to assess what you have got and what you hope to achieve in order to be able to choose the appropriate level of change.

Repairs: if you are a homeowner, it is essential to do any repair work or maintenance. Make sure, at first, not to overlook any aspects of your home's structure, fabric or general condition that needs urgent attention. Many severe problems start small, so don't be tempted to wait until later. **Signs of potential trouble:** Wide cracks, especially if they continue to widen, may indicate serious problems such as the failure of structure member. Discolored paintwork, bulging or blown plasterworks, wet patches on brick or stonework, and musty smells all indicate damp penetration or possible leaks. Fungal growths, insect boreholes, rotten or powdery wood are signs of wet rot, woodworm and dry rot. Pest infestations, such as rodents, can cause havoc, particularly to pipework and cabling. Sloping floors may indicate ground subsidence or trouble with the foundations. Roof damage, such as sagging and bowing, can indicate serious structural problems; missing tiles or slates can lead to leaks and water damage.

2. Cosmetic changes: relatively easy, inexpensive and quick to many other types of improvement, cosmetic changes such as painting or changing furniture, can have a large impact on the way your home looks. Fresh paint work can give any room an instant uplift; decoration can even make your home feel more spacious by enhancing natural light. However, cosmetic changes can not correct poorly planned layouts, fitted areas that do not function properly or other structural or design drawbacks.

3. Design changes: it usually involves professional help but you will be able to dramatically improve your home functioning by making better use of the space you already have. This improvement type has several forms, from moving partitions and walls to preplanning fitted areas such as kitchens and bathrooms.

4. Structural repairs: these include changes to load-bearing walls, external walls, roof and so on. Most loft or basement conversions, extensions and the installation of new openings fall into this category. Most of structural changes need official permissions and you will certainly require professional advice from a surveyor, architect or structural engineer. In a nutshell, you will have always to plan in advance any improvements by calculating your budget, and choosing your preferred style. For further information and assistance do not hesitate to ask a question, we will more than happy to answer you for free.