

From Debbie Stang, Home Loan Officer

A big trend in real estate is remodeling an existing home. In 2009, Americans spent more than \$114 billion on home remodels, according to the National Association of Home Builders. Remodeling is expected to surpass new home construction in the next few years, says the NAHB.

If you're looking to add value to your home and enjoy some of the more modern trends of home living, here are some projects to consider:

Create a family room. Many new homes feature open floor plans with a family room playing center stage. You can remodel or renovate your existing home to be more new construction.

Remodel your basement. Game rooms and guest suites are also trends in new construction. Create the same spaces with a remodel of an existing basement or finishing an unfinished one.

Create a home office. More people are either telecommuting or starting home businesses. Create a dedicated space that is wired and outfitted to function as an updated office for yourself now and to attract potential future homebuyers.

Replace the roof. First impressions count, plus ensuring you have a solid roof over your head helps retain your home's value.

Landscape your yard. Create curb appeal with the front yard and an outdoor entertainment space in the back to provide not only a good first impression, but an increase in your living space.

Make smaller changes. A couple of buckets of paint, new tile and trim, an upgrade in

bathroom fixtures, adding or replacing cabinet hardware, some decorative detailing such as crown moulding – they can give your home a fresh, new look on relatively low-cost budget.

If you're embarking on a large-scale renovation, consider either a home equity loan or a second mortgage to finance those costs. [Click here](#) to find out more about Mid American's loans.