

8 must-have features home buyers want in 2022

As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated disruptions, new property market trends are coming to the fore. After the initial lockdown period, extra space for a home office and family entertainment, and large gardens with pools became popular with buyers once again, says Cobus Odendaal, CEO of Lew Geffen Sotheby's International Realty in Johannesburg and Randburg.



Source: Supplied

He adds that location also became less of a priority than in recent years as those who could work remotely took advantage of the fact by moving out of cities and opting for a more peaceful lifestyle in smaller towns and seaside villages. “However, as we now begin to emerge from the greatest disruption in a century and people are adjusting to a post-pandemic world, getting their lives back on track and once again planning for the future, we’re beginning to get a good idea of what the trends will be going forward,” says Odendaal.

If you’re thinking of renovating your home, buying a fixer upper, or are about to start building your dream home, he says that the following features will appeal to most home buyers for years to come and will deliver the best return on investment in the long run:

1. Security – above all else

As crime continues to rise, so does the demand for gated complexes and security estates, so if your home isn’t in such a development, it’s imperative that you install the best security features that you can as this will be one of the first questions you can expect from prospective tenants and buyers.

2. Updated kitchens and bathrooms

If you’re thinking of selling your home in the near future and have a limited budget for upgrades, once you’ve given the place a fresh coat of paint, the remainder of your money would be well spent modernising the bathrooms and kitchen. Fewer buyers are willing to compromise on this aspect than any other. Whilst there will always be a good market for the

'buy to renovate' properties, purchasers not looking for projects will prioritise these two spaces.



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3. Energy efficiency

First-time home buyers, especially, are interested in anything that will save them money in the long run, although almost every potential buyer will be looking to limit their monthly spend on utility bills considering the rising cost of electricity.

In fact, millennials who now make up the largest property buying group often expect energy efficiencies like solar geysers to be installed in homes and eco-friendly features will also win them over.

4. Wireless connectivity

No other generation is more aware of what today's technology is capable of than millennials and their inherent dependency on technology will affect the way they view homes. If they have to decide between two similar properties, they'll always be drawn to those with strong cell phone service and high-speed internet connectivity.

5. Flexible spaces to maximise tight square meterage

With the economy being one of the biggest casualties of the pandemic, many people have been forced to downsize either their current homes or their dream home expectations and will therefore seek out properties with rooms that can be used in a multitude of applications.

Kitchen diners are a feature that's especially attractive to families with children as it becomes a second communal area where the family can gather and kids can do homework. A spare room can be both a guest bedroom and an office and utility rooms can also double as store rooms.



Source: Supplied

6. Double kitchen sink

If you're renovating your kitchen, consider adding a double, side-by-side sink. Most of us gave our scullery areas a good workout during the pandemic and those with small single sinks will have come to realise how much better a double sink is for efficiency when cleaning and for keeping tidy. When choosing a sink, look for one that's deep enough to accommodate large pots and pans or cookie sheets.

7. Walk-in kitchen pantry

This has become one of the most coveted kitchen features since the pandemic when we were forced to reduce our number of supermarket visits and had to stock up when we did venture out. They're also great for storing kitchen appliances that are used less often and other goods like cooler boxes.

8. Exterior lighting

Exterior lighting used to be mainly for ambience on warm summer evenings but these days it also serves as an added safety feature for your home, not only deterring would-be trespassers but also making it easier for home owners to spot and ward off any intruders.

And illuminating a well-manicured lawn and beautiful garden will also capture potential buyers' attention before they even set foot in the front door.

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