

House Helper question, October 23, 2007

Question:

I'd like to update my kitchen. What type of appliances would you suggest for an investment home?

This is a common question from homeowners planning a kitchen remodel. You refer to it as your kitchen but also as an "investment home". I assume that you are referring to a home in which you have decided to remain for an indefinite period and not one that you are holding for quick resale or rental.

In general, appliances selected should be comparable to the value of the house but should also meet the needs and lifestyle of the family. If you live in a typical ranch style home, you may decide not to purchase high-end, commercial style appliances that may overprice your kitchen. If you enjoy cooking and you entertain frequently, however, these appliances become a good investment for your lifestyle and payback becomes secondary.

Commercial look appliances are the current trend. Gas cooktops are most popular, but the sleek look of the electric cooktop still appeals to many consumers. Dual-fuel ranges with gas cooktops and electric convection ovens offer many conveniences. Electric convection wall ovens paired with a microwave and/or warming drawer accommodate the busy lifestyles of today. Frequently, the ventilation hood is the most over-looked item in a kitchen. The hood should be appropriately sized for the cooktop and should be vented to the exterior.

Noise levels and basic functionality are the major factors with dishwashers. Look for food disposers with self-cleaning filtering systems. Noise levels vary and most manufacturers now publish the noise ratings on their products.

Refrigerators come in all shapes, sizes and configurations with a wide range of pricing. Unless built-in, refrigerators are viewed as easily changed and rarely influence home purchase decisions. This is an item that should be purchased based upon your family needs.

The internet is an exceptional tool for gathering and comparing information on appliances before going to the store to shop.