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For the Week of February 5, 2023

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Going up? Home elevators are on the rise

Ann McGee loves her home. If you saw it, you would understand. Every room of the 2,800-square-foot, Mediterranean-style house in Winter Park, Florida, reflects her well-traveled life, her many friendships, her rich memories. She loves her oasis-like patio. She loves her neighbors and her community.

What she doesn't love are her stairs.

At age 73, the retired college administrator, who's had one knee replaced, found that an upstairs master was a bit of a pain literally. She considered renovating to put a bedroom downstairs, but that was too costly. Moving from her home of 15 years didn't appeal either.

When her niece showed her a magazine ad she'd clipped that featured a modern-looking, shaftless elevator powered by air pressure, McGee was intrigued. "It didn't look like any home elevator I'd ever seen," she said. "It looked like a piece of art."

Plus, the installation did not involve knocking out walls or digging under the floor into the foundation as required for traditional shaft elevators. Shaft elevators send cabins through 5-foot-by-5-foot (minimum) spaces within walls, while shaftless elevators sit in the open on finished floors. Their see-through cylinders transport passengers from floor to floor using air pressure or cables.

McGee talked to a couple elevator companies that sold pneumatic vacuum elevators, and, this past November, elevated



AT HOME WITH
Marni Jameson

her own home with one.

"I love the look of it," she said of the tube-shaped elevator tucked in just beside the stairs in her entryway.

"I worried that it would ruin the aesthetics of my home, but it's enhanced it."

McGee selected the color of the metal, as well as the tint on the polycarbonate windows.

While she doesn't use it every time she wants to go up or downstairs, McGee, an avid traveler, definitely uses it for her luggage.

"Hips, knees, hearts, backs, lungs, in-laws, convenience," Dawn O'Connor, owner of Daytona Elevator, rattles off the reasons customers call her. Her family-owned business has been installing elevators since 1987.

To that list, Rich Eller, owner of HomeLift, a Nashville-based elevator dealer, adds those people who "flat out are not moving and have got to get upstairs."

Given the demographics, the demand for home elevators is quickly growing, and the shaftless models are the fastest-growing sector, he said. Five years ago, shaftless elevators accounted for 6 percent of Eller's

home elevator installations. Last year, that percentage more than doubled. He expects that 20 to 25 percent of home elevators will be shaftless by 2025.

"We have a population of people who want to age in place," Eller said. "More people are realizing that installing an elevator or a stair lift is a lot cheaper than moving. Builders and architects recognize this is a growing market and are designing more homes with elevators in mind."

"I love where I live and how I live," McGee said. "I wanted to buy more time in this house, and I did."

While not every home is a candidate for an elevator, if your home's stairs are becoming an issue, here's what to consider before you pack up and move.

- A solution for every budget

If creating a downstairs bedroom isn't an option, the lift industry has many ways to get you upstairs, O'Connor said. The least expensive option is a stair lift. A seat that travels straight up a flight of stairs typically costs between \$3,500 and \$4,000. If the stairway curves or takes a turn, the stair lift cost will climb to as much as \$15,000.

Pneumatic vacuum elevators cost from \$35,000 to \$60,000, depending on the size. They come in three widths: 30 inches; 37 inches, which is what McGee purchased; and 52 inches, which will accommodate a wheelchair. McGee paid \$40,000 for her elevator, which includes a fold-down seat and phone.

PVEs are among the higher-end products, Eller said, add-

ing that some shaftless lifts sell for as little as \$28,000. Construction costs to retrofit a space is additional, and they vary with the work required.

- Build it in

The best time to install an elevator is when you're building a home. But adding one later may be easier than you think. Before you give up on the idea because you don't see where you could

install an elevator, have an expert out.

"Often, people think they don't have a place to put an elevator, then we find two or three possibilities," Eller said.

- Location, location, location

When looking for the best placement, start upstairs to find

SEE MARNI, 3H

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MARNI

FROM PAGE 2H

where you would like to exit, usually on a landing or common area, and work down. Remember you can enter on one side of the elevator and exit out the other side.

For a traditional elevator built into a shaft, two closets stacked on one another is ideal. These shafts can be inside a home or built onto the exterior. A shaftless elevator is easier to fit in most homes.

- Looks matter

The entry to a traditional elevator can truly blend into the woodwork. It can mimic paneling or a closet door, so you don't even know an elevator is there.

However, as home elevators become more common and sculptural, many are coming out of the closet.

- Added value

Most realtors agree that a home elevator done well adds value.

"I feel like having an elevator lets you tap into a whole new market," McGee said.

Marni Jameson is the author of six home and lifestyle books, including "What to Do With Everything You Own to Leave the Legacy You Want," "Downsizing the Family Home – What to Save, What to Let Go" and "Downsizing the Blended Home – When Two Households Become One." She can be contacted at www.marnijameson.com.



Elevated living Today's shaftless elevators offer a sleek, artistic alternative to larger, traditional elevators that require more machinery. "I've just greatly extended the number of years I can live in my house," said Ann McGee, pictured at home with her new pneumatic vacuum elevator. Photo courtesy of Marni Jameson

Open Houses Sunday, February 5, 2023

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3 OPEN HOUSES 4.6 PROPERTIES FOR SALE 7 RENTALS

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22 Norwood Road, Charleston
\$689,900
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Margo Teeter
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Tips to reclaim work-life balance

The ability to work remotely has opened up different opportunities for the millions of people who work 9 to 5 each day. While the advantages to remote work are too numerous to count, logging hours from the sofa is not necessarily a panacea for all working ills. In fact, many remote workers often lament how much their work-life balance has been adversely affected by their decision to avoid the office.

According to the career resource Zippia, 27 percent of United States employees work remotely as of 2021. There are expected to be 36.2 million American employees working remotely by 2025. In its 2020

Household Pulse Survey, the U.S. Census Bureau found that more than one-third of U.S. households reported working from home more frequently than before the pandemic.

Switching to remote working certainly may have improved flexibility for many workers, but it also has led to them putting in longer hours - something that may affect home life. According to a survey of 2,800 workers by the Los Angeles-based staffing firm Robert Half, 45 percent of respondents said they regularly work more hours during the week than they did before transitioning to remote work. Also, 70 percent of professionals reported

working on weekends.

Americans are not alone in this phenomenon. The business support company NordVPN Teams says the average length of time an employee working from home in the U.K., Canada, Austria, and U.S. is logged on at their computer has increased by more than two hours a day since the coronavirus crisis.

As home offices have become a more common feature, workers admit to taking shorter lunch breaks, working through sickness, and being "available" during times that would normally be devoted to leisure or family. Technology has made it possible to get alerts on mobile phones even

when workers have seemingly logged off for the day.

Mastering control of one's time can take some trial and error. However, there are some tips that can make it easier to achieve:

- Set limits (and stick to them). Don't overschedule yourself. Figure out what you can handle in terms of work and home responsibilities and limit those actions.
- Detach from work. Try to keep work equipment in a separate area from the living room or kitchen. This way you can turn off the computer and call it a day. Turn off alerts on your phone when the work day ends.
- Schedule fun times with the

family. Make it a priority to fill the calendar with plenty of activities to enjoy in your leisure time, which can help to offset the demands of work.

• Prioritize and assess frequently. Everyone has different priorities. Remote work may help you realize those priorities more easily, such as working specific hours to be able to care for an elderly parent or an infant. Don't feel the need to compensate by taking on more work.

Remote work benefits many people. But to benefit fully from such situations, professionals may need to make a concerted effort to achieve a greater work-life balance.

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Some hidden costs of DIY

The home renovation industry is booming, and that's reflected in the cost to upgrade a home. Home Guide says remodeling a kitchen costs \$25,000 on average, and a bathroom renovation runs around \$10,000. Though rates fluctuate depending on a host of variables, renovations can cost \$15 to \$60 per square foot depending on the project.

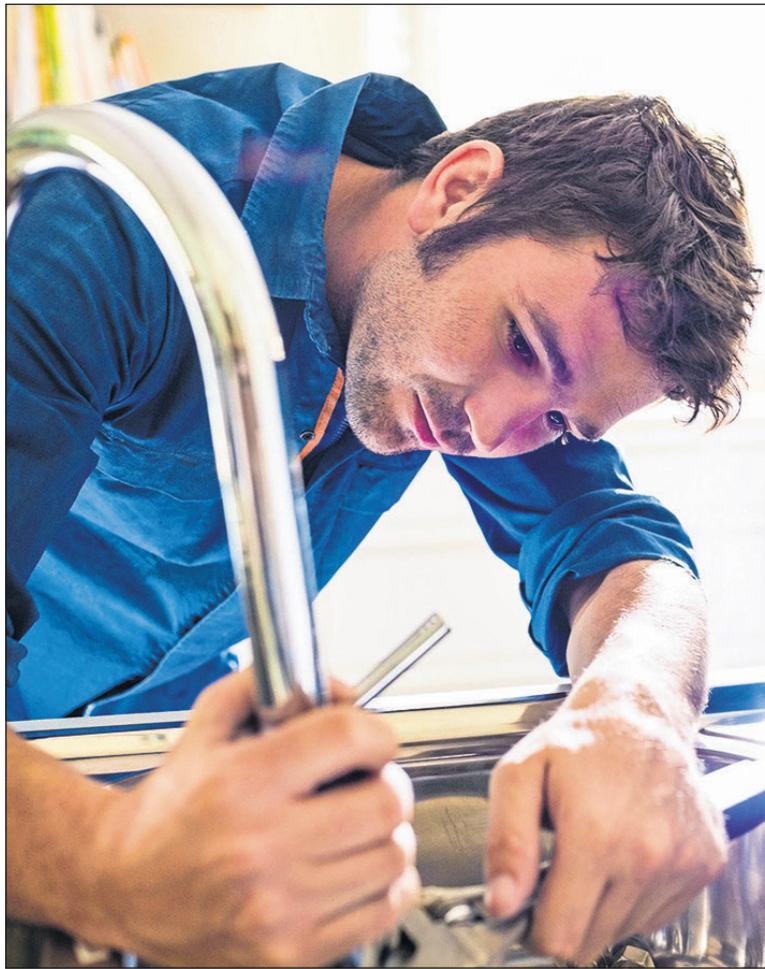
The average homeowner wants to save as much money as possible when renovating their home. Many think doing much of the work themselves is the easiest way to keep costs low. What some homeowners may not realize is that DIY can be costly and prove a big hassle in the long run. The following are some hidden costs of DIY and renovating in general.

Time

DIY projects are a major drain on free time. Homeowners taking the DIY route typically work on weekends or after work. Few people can take off and devote their undivided attention to a remodel like a contractor can. Time is a valuable resource that is not renewable. Therefore, think of a DIY project in terms of what it would equal in lost wages. Because homeowners are not professionals, a DIY project may take double the time it would take a contractor. It may be worth it to simply hire it out.

Mistakes

Many resources are available to help DIY enthusiasts work on a project, but there are still tricks and techniques learned after years on the job. DIYers may damage their homes by taking shortcuts or not understanding how to do a job properly. A



plumbing mistake, for example, may lead to flooding that damages another room in the home. And such mistakes may not be covered by homeowners insurance policies.

Fines

Permits are required for many home improvement projects. Forgetting to obtain permits or not realizing one may be necessary could subject you to hefty fines and/or force the job to be redone so it's up to code. Professionals likely know the rules regarding permits and often include the cost of acquiring permits in an estimate.

Remediation

It's only after opening up walls or removing floors that you may discover issues you did not anticipate, such as termite damage or mold. These unforeseen factors can drive up the overall costs of a project.

Disposal

Removing old building materials or gutting a room is part of many renovations. Chances are this refuse simply cannot be left at the curb for trash pickup. As a DIYer, you may not factor the costs for a dumpster or the time and money required to haul debris to

a recycling or landfill center.

Tools

DIYers may have to purchase tools as they engage in new projects. These expenses can add up and negate the savings of doing

some of the work yourself.

DIY projects may initially seem like a way to save money, but weekend warriors should calculate the hidden costs associated with renovations before deciding to do some work on their own.

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- *Thu. February 16th – Mount Nebo – Beautiful 3 Bedroom on 1-Acre on Summersville Lake
- *Tue. February 21st – Dunbar – Two 2-Bedroom Homes in Dunbar
- *Thu. February 23rd – Charleston – 3 Bedroom in Great Location with Flexible Zoning
- *Thu. February 23rd – Barboursville – 11+ Prime Acres in Barboursville
- *Thu. March 2nd – Saint Albans – Move-in Ready 5 Bedroom in Saint Albans
- Thu. March 2nd – Kanawha Co. – Two Kanawha County Properties
- *Thu. March 2nd – South Charleston – 5-Story Professional Building in South Charleston
- *Tue. March 7th – Charleston – Remodeled Commercial Building on Elk River Near Coonskin Park
- *Thu. March 16th – Danville – Multi-Use Commercial Building on Main Throughfare in Danville

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- *Wed. February 8th – Charleston – Cozy 3-Bedroom Selling to the Highest Bidder
- *Wed. February 8th - Nitro - 3 Bedroom Townhome Selling to the Highest Bidder
- *Thu. February 16th – Winfield – 2 Lots in Crystal Springs Selling to the Highest Bidders
- *Tue. February 21st – Elkview – Furniture, Glassware, China, Prints & Art, and More!
- *Tue. February 21st – Saint Albans – 2 Bedroom in Saint Albans Selling to the Highest Bidder
- *Tue. February 21st – Shinnston – 1973 Chevrolet Camaro 454 CI Automatic
- *Wed. February 22nd – Charleston – Move-in Ready 3 Bedroom Selling to the Highest Bidder
- *Thu. February 23rd – Huntington – 3 Bedroom Huntington Home
- *Thu. February 23rd – Dunbar – 2 Bedroom in a Convenient Location
- *Mon. February 27th – Poca – 18 Acres with 3-Stall Barn in Poca
- *Tue. February 28th – Saint Albans – 3 Bedroom Project Home Selling to the Highest Bidder
- *Wed. March 1st – Huntington – Three Income Producing Homes in Cabell County
- *Wed. March 1st – Charleston – 2 Bedroom in Charleston Selling to the Highest Bidder
- *Thu. March 2nd – Eleanor – 3 Bedroom in a Great Neighborhood Selling to the Highest Bidder
- *Mon. March 6th – Charleston – 4 Bedroom in Charleston Selling to the Highest Bidder
- *Tue. March 7th – Charleston – Two Bedroom Charleston Home
- *Wed. March 8th – Glasgow – 3 Bedroom Project Home Selling to the Highest Bidder
- *Thu. March 9th – Hurricane – Stone Ranch on Nearly 1 Acre Selling to the Highest Bidder



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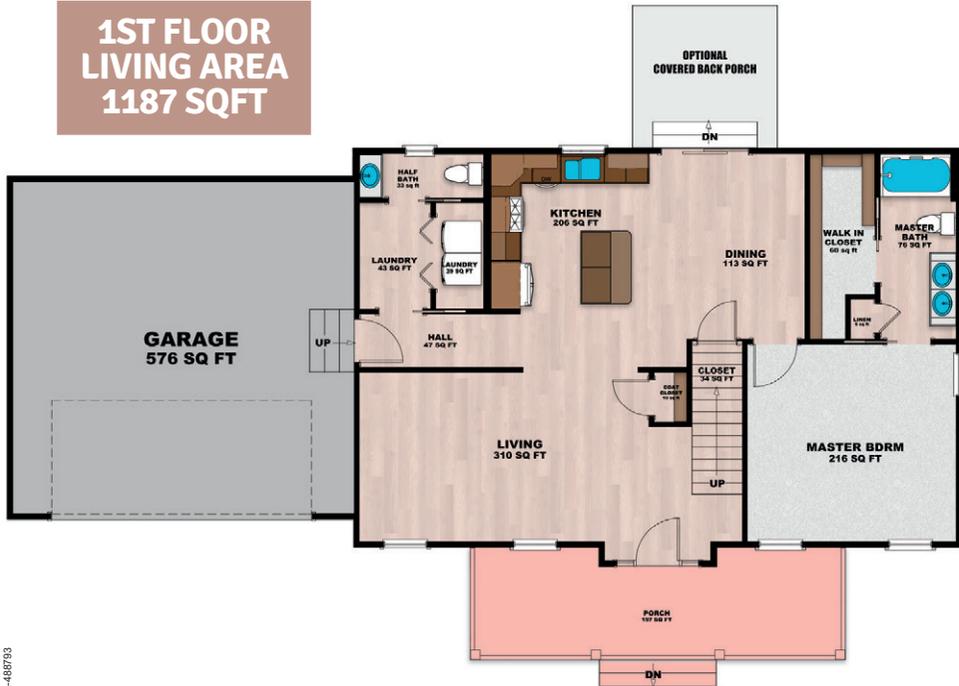
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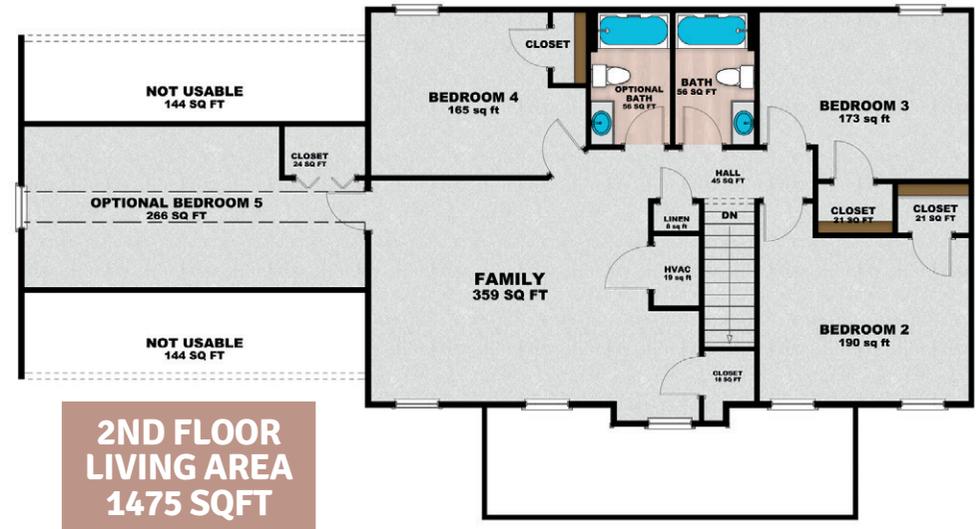
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