

Little changes can have a big impact



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Sometimes you know exactly what it is that drives you crazy about your home.

These issues may be evident because they are visually and even audibly apparent, that is, squeaky floors, noise transfer through walls, a dripping faucet.

These “little things” may not seem to affect anything major, so we typically just deal with them by fixing them if we can or living with them if we don’t think they can be fixed.

It’s easy to ignore some but harder (and maybe not environmentally responsible) to ignore others. Little changes, however, can have a big impact.

Fixing floors

When you’ve moved into a home with floors that aren’t exactly your taste, the thought of a jackhammer may be the first that pops into your head (and then you may frantically shove that thought all the way down

because a full renovation just isn’t in the cards right now).

If you have hardwood in good shape but just not the right colour, you may consider sanding it down and refinishing it to a tone of your choice. However, if issues with your floors seem more structural due to cracking or squeaking, you may not have considered that you can fix them.

Squeak Knights uses a unique technology which eliminates the source of the squeak (without damaging your existing flooring) leaving you with comfortable, silent floors.

Homeowners with newborns being woken up by the sounds of squeaking footsteps would find this service a blessing!

Plumbing issues

Leaky faucets or toilets that struggle with each flush, may have issues that lie beneath the surface. I find plumbing services are kind of like servicing your car or getting your teeth cleaned — your mechanic (or dentist) can tell you something’s wrong and if you don’t know about cars or what’s really going on inside your mouth, you simply believe them.



Cynthia Soda says it’s important to trust the pros and weigh your options.

Professionally, we are sometimes asked about price matching plumbing quotes to reflect what our clients find in big box stores. A not-so-well-known piece of information is that to get the higher volume at a lowered cost, the quality of the fittings in the big box stores is not the same as what you’d find from your local plumbing supply.

They may look the same, but they are not constructed of the same materials. In this case, you may save some money at the outset, but it will likely be spent down the road buying parts and paying for service. It’s important to trust the pros and weigh your options.

Between the walls

Having a laundry room on the second level is a nice feature in a lot of modern homes.

Not having to drag the dirty laundry down to the basement makes for an efficient laundry day, but not so wonderful when the baby’s room is adjacent.

Insulating existing walls help dampen the transfer of sound or the application of acoustic wallpaper or even acoustic paint could help.

The ever-popular painted “ship-lap” or rustic wood walls can add visual interest in your space and do double duty by adding a layer and reducing noise transfer. Each are effective and don’t require a full renovation.

When the little things feel more like big things, start small and you may just notice a big change in the way you feel about your home.

— Cynthia Soda is principal of Soda Pop Designs Inc., providing custom renovation and design services throughout the GTA. Visit www.sodapopdesigns.com.



In the kitchen, pay close attention to the fittings — the quality you get from big box stores may not be the same as your local plumbing supply outlet.



Properly insulating laundry room walls can help dampen the transfer of sound, especially important if baby is sleeping in an adjacent room.



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