

Changes that add value

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Jane Burton Taylor investigates the renovations that can add value to your house.

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Convert an attic

Added value: \$80,000 with drop-down stairs, \$150,000 for usable room with fixed stairs.

Kell estimates it costs \$20,000 to convert an attic for storage and \$40,000-\$50,000 to turn it into a home office or bedroom.

The latter involves strengthening structure, insulating, adding an operable skylight window and installing stairs - either drop-down or permanent.

But there are challenges, such as where to locate the stairs without messing up the lower-level layout.

"Attic conversion is a definite bonus, especially in areas like ours [the inner west] where land size is only around 180 square metres. Even with pull-down stairs and lining, an attic conversion will make the house more saleable," Pilcher says.