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WHAT'S NEW IN GARAGE DOORS?

Test Yourself!

Here's a quick test for your decorating sense: walk outside your house directly toward the curb. Now stop and turn around. What's the first thing you see?

Chances are pretty good it's a massive, hulking garage door.

So ask yourself this question: is that thing helping the look of my house, or hurting it?

It may be doing neither – it's just a big, generic rectangle that eats up a third or more of your front façade.

Today, there are new ways to make a design statement with your garage door that will kick-start your home's curb appeal and could even add to its market value. That's cash back in your pocket, according to a nationwide survey of real estate agents as conducted by Stratamark Research.

When real estate agents were shown "before" and "after" snaps of houses that upgraded with new, stylish garage doors, they increased the list price of the home anywhere from 1 to 4 percent. That means a \$2,000+ investment in a garage door could increase the sale value of your home by as much as \$7,000 if you're selling a \$175,000 home.

Back to the Future, Carriage Style

That gaping hole in the front of your house represents a huge design opportunity. Your local garage door dealer can set you up with stylish new energy-efficient garage doors that accent and flatter the good looks of your house. Better yet, a distinctive new door will make your house stand out from all your neighbors' homes that sport an old humdrum garage door design.

Carriage doors are the hot new trend. They roll up just like your old door, but they fool the eye by echoing the hinged, swing-out door style and charm of old-time carriage houses.

New carriage house garage doors are available in real wood that you can leave natural or customize with the colors of your home. Steel or vinyl-clad carriage doors offer a high-style but low-maintenance choice.

But the style doesn't stop there. You can let the light in with gorgeous glass windows in dozens of designer styles. Add the look of wrought-iron decorative hardware for a distinctive period look. The result is a spectacular makeover.

Contemporary Living

If your home's style doesn't fit the traditional look of carriage house doors, a wide variety of contemporary designs are now available that can make your home the envy of the neighborhood. A door that combines glass and aluminum, for example, creates a new look that is as much at home in San Francisco as in the Far East. If your home has a Mediterranean or southern European look, you might consider garage doors that have the look of French doors. They appear to swing outward, but feature the hinged-panel operation of a traditional garage door. Opaque glass adds to the elegance of these classically styled doors.

Create Your Own

Fancy yourself a designer? Do you have a one-of-a-kind home that cries out for a one-of-a-kind garage door? Some garage door manufacturers will work with you to design your own custom creation. It may not be the most inexpensive way to go, but it combines correct engineering with your own design flair for a door that will make you proud every time you pull in the garage.

But be sure to have a professional install any garage door. The counterbalance system on these doors is under high tension. Even an experienced do-it-yourselfer can get injured or killed – yes, killed – by making a slight mistake during installation. A professional can install your door for you, quickly and safely, and haul away your old door. The cost of installation is well worth it.

Fight the Power: Storm-Strength Garage Doors

Whether you live on the coast, inland, or in the heartland, your home needs to stand up to extreme winds. Storm damage experts testify that your garage door is your home's first line of defense against strong winds.

During hurricanes, for example, houses with an attached garage can literally blow apart if they're outfitted with flimsy garage doors. Older doors can blast in first, and that lets pressure build up in your house, which can blow the roof off and destroy your life's investment.

But here's the good news. Ever since the 1992 Hurricane Andrew, all major garage door manufacturers have been designing and producing doors that meet or exceed the most stringent building codes. Some garage doors now can withstand sustained hurricane-force winds of up to 145 mph.

New, heavy-duty garage doors. Fabulous styles, finishes and hardware. New garage doors make it easy to makeover your home so it stands apart from all the other houses in your neighborhood. It's money well-spent, because it's one of few investments that can pay for itself by increasing the perceived value of your home.

For the latest information, keep on checking GarageWowNow.com!