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Dazzling dollar savers

Experts in the know show you how to achieve that dream abode without breaking the bank

WORDS SUE GREEN

Whether it is a lick of paint or a full-scale extension, renovating your home will not only add value but make it a more enjoyable place to live.

But builders equal bills, and the cost of structural changes or even a makeover can be daunting. So, the question is: how to create your dream home without busting your budget? We did a little groundwork and asked some experts; the result: great tips for making your dollar go further and getting the best value for the money you spend.

CAROLYN BURNS-MCCRAVE (pictured right), interior designer, Channel 7's *House Rules*

"Prioritise maximising space over splurging on fancy finishes. Getting the layout right for how you live is the most important part of any renovation. It's easy to change a laminate benchtop to stone in a few years' time when your bank balance has recovered, but adding on extra space is a major undertaking, so plan ahead.

Even when you are renovating on a budget it's important to engage a design professional to look at your spaces with fresh eyes. It may seem like an extravagance, but a designer can stretch your budget and your imagination for a creative and considered result." ➔

