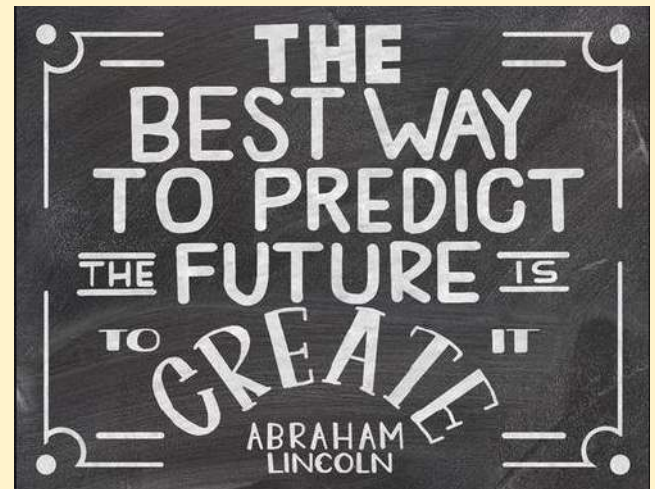


Newsletter 2017



1—Kitchen Remodeling remains as the most popular room in the house to be upgraded. It may be as simple as new appliances or new countertops or a full kitchen remodel that involves new cabinetry, floors, lighting and even redesign of layout. This article from Lyndsy Felsman, a home decorator and stager, is a great article on Quartz Countertops, one of the most popular countertop selections today, often out selling granite because the price has dropped and some materials even compete favorably with granite!

Why I Chose Quartz Countertops in My Kitchen Remodel

After moving into a new-to-us house in the fall of 2016, my husband and I were eager to make it feel like a home for us and our three boys. Knowing the kitchen is the heart of our home, we wanted to remodel it first. I love minimal, modern farmhouse style, and I've dreamt of a white kitchen for *years*. But I wanted the look without it feeling cold and impersonal. With the countertops being a focal point in the kitchen, I was drawn toward clean, white quartz, but I had many questions before committing to the material. Here's how I ended up choosing the perfect countertops for our budget, style and needs.



Why I Was Drawn to Quartz

I knew I wanted a nice, clean and bright kitchen, so white countertops were the obvious choice. I was specifically drawn to quartz because it gives the room a feel of luxury and longevity. That last one is especially important because I have three boys and I love to entertain. And if I'm being honest, I was drawn to the way it seems to glitter ever so slightly in different lights.



The material itself is an engineered product that's made mostly from ground quartz compressed with different amounts of fillers or resins under intense heat and pressure. The more filler added to the material, the less expensive the quartz countertop gets.

Budget Matters

For this remodel, we had to first look at what we were willing to spend. I was skeptical we could even afford quartz. I knew it wasn't the cheapest option out there because I had priced it for interior design clients.

Evaluate the space: I had to consider the shape of my countertop would drive up the price. We have an extra-wide peninsula, and an unusual 45-degree angle in the corner by the sink. Those factors can drive price up because of the quantity of material needed and installation costs.

Get quotes: Even though I knew I wanted quartz, I also got quotes for granite for comparison. I got the quotes knowing granite might be a busier look, but I wanted to at least look. Then I really dug into my quartz options and prices. Although some companies and lines of quartz are pricey, my local countertop representative found a company that was running a promotion on some of its lines. That was a huge help on the budget.

Stay within budget: Of course, I was worried that a more budget-friendly option wouldn't look as nice as the more expensive, higher-end quartz counters. Other ones I was initially drawn to had more color variation, such as flecks of gray or veining running through them, but also cost more.

Those more expensive quartz options (upward of \$5,300 for my countertop) were more natural and had less resin in the end product. I chose a quartz with a slightly higher amount of resin but the durability and beauty of some of the leading brands. I was able to get what I needed for just under \$2,500 installed and did not go over budget. The granite I quoted came in at a similar price — about \$2,500 — but the quartz at that same price range had more of the look I wanted.

Price tips:

- Visit local stores or call or email online retailers to learn more about their products and what they offer. This will help you get an estimated price. I especially love checking with the smaller stores in my town because they have relationships with certain companies and can help you get a great price.
- Ask the installation company whether the price of your countertop installation includes removal of the old counters or just installation and delivery of the new countertop



Style Selection

I knew I wanted to pair the quartz countertop with white subway tile backsplash.

Compare samples: I had a sample of subway tiles from our local building materials store and held them up to quartz samples to find the right pairing. Some quartz countertops have more flecks of gray or marbling. Other quartz countertops are more engineered, so they have a more controlled, consistent finish. The latter finish matched the minimal, modern farmhouse style I wanted to achieve with the white subway tiles.

Try different light: When picking a countertop material, have all your countertop samples in hand and look at them against your cabinets and backsplash in *all* lights.

For example, morning sun casts a very different light than your ceiling lights in the evening. This is why it's important to not just pick your color at the paint store, under their fluorescent lights. Check them in morning, afternoon and evening lights.

Pro tip: You need to love the material in every kind of light. If you don't, keep looking.

Family Needs

We have three boys, so I didn't want something that would get marked or scratched easily. I wanted it to wear well without worry.

Pros of quartz: You'll dull your knives before you end up leaving a noticeable scratch. Most companies have a 15- to 30-year warranty, and some even offer a lifetime guarantee.



Cons: The white quartz can stain ever so slightly if a red wine spill sits too long on the surface. It is still a natural element, after all.

Cleaning tip: A little baking soda or glass ceramic cleaner usually cleans it off completely, or pretty close. In my experience with many countertops, they all can get marked or scratched eventually over time.

All the pros of quartz outweighed the cons for our family. It's one of the best materials I've seen and used for efficiency in a busy kitchen.

II—How to make your basement increase the value of your home!!

The basement doesn't just have to be a space to throw all of that extra storage. Show it as usable space, and it may even help you increase the value of the home. Basement remodels typically recoup about 70 percent of their costs at time of resale, which can add a tremendous amount of value to your home.

Making it the coolest room in the house may not be too difficult either. After all, basements tend to stay cooler during the summer months, making this an ideal place for the family to hang out when the weather heats up outside.





1. Create an In-Home Theater

Basements not only are typically cooler than the rest of the home, but they're also usually darker. For that reason, they're an excellent place to add a theater to watch movies on those hot summer nights. Best of all, you don't have to do a complete basement remodel, with costs around \$50,000, to gain this space. A TV mount costs around \$250, while built in seating costs around \$840 – \$1,680. (Just be sure for safety to completely waterproof the room before running wires through the basement.)

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2. Make a Children's Play Area

Basements are often neglected areas of the home, used primarily for storage and not much else. So why not turn your unused basement space into a new playroom for your kids?

Start with the staircase. Most basements have only partially finished staircases so installing a new one will help make the space more comfortable as well as safer. Next, ensure that you have egress windows installed, and that the basement is fully waterproofed. From there, you can carpet the floors to make the space more comfortable, and move your children's toys downstairs to make more space in their rooms.

3. Create an Adult Entertainment Space

If you love to entertain, consider building a bar into your basement. Basements are already the ideal place to install a wine cellar, so why not take it a step further and put in an entertainment area and bar for parties as well? Basements that walkout onto patios can be the ideal place for summer entertaining, giving guests a way to get in out of the heat or a summer rainstorm. Consider putting in a tile floor to give the room a finished look and keep the floors easy to clean. Match the bar countertop to the color of the floors for a fresh, stylish appearance.



4. Create a Garden Utility Room

If you spend any time out in the garden, you probably know about the dirt, tools, and pots that accompany this hobby. Basements are a great place to install a utility sink and counter, and to store all of your garden paraphernalia. Installing a french drain and a hose will make cleanup a snap, while shelving placed just beneath the windows will give your plants a place to sprout before you take them outside for the summer.



5. Create a New Family Room

Family rooms often get even more use than the more formal living room, so family rooms in a cooler basement can get a lot of use during the summer months. Basements finished as family rooms may be coveted by homebuyers too, giving you the maximum return on investment. This includes not only tiling or carpeting the floors, but also putting up drywall to complete the walls as well. Consider adding a suspended acoustic ceiling to help insulate the basement from the sounds above, while making the rooms more attractive at the same time.

6. Recreation Space

This can include space for a pool table, a ping pong table, air hockey or all kinds of table-electronic games such as foosball, pinball, dartboards, bubble-hockey and indoor basketball, or just card, poker or casino tables and don't forget your own gym. Recreation is huge for families and will keep your children and adults entertained for hours. This space will be seen as a real value for any buyer of your home and often the buyer will buy your used games and tables or equipment so you can buy new ones and do not have to move to your next house.



School is around the corner, hope you are prepared for the new school year

Larry, Gisele and

Agatha



4540 DANBI, Hadley Twp 48455

\$575,000—UNIQUE HOUSE



Large price reduction, seller says sell this house, will look at all reasonable offers. Magnificent Builder's own custom built home on 5 acres. Special features make this home one of a kind: 2 master suites, one could be an in-law suite w/ large WIC & custom granite bath. Gourmet kit w/ cherry cabs, huge island, double oven & high end SS Appliances. 5 Bedrooms, 4.2 Baths. Mammoth Great Rm w/ FP off Kit for entertaining. Studio apartment w/ BR, Kit, LR, & Din. Rm. Low Taxes - only \$3300. Wood Boiler + 2 furnaces keeps heating bill extremely low. Lifetime Roof warranty. Pole/horse barn, 4 car gar, plus-huge, heated & workshop. Finished W/O basement. 2 horses allowed. MLS# 217043788

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49114 DRIFTWOOD Drive, Shelby Twp 48317-1742

\$469,900— LAKE FRONT



VERY MOTIVATED SELLERS AND WILL LOOK AT ALL OFFERS. Most desirable lakefront on forest lake. Live in luxury w/resort like living in this beautiful 4bdrm 3.1bthrm brick colonial. Includes dramatic circular staircase in foyer, large kitchen w/ island lots of counter space. All appliances included. Formal dining rm&extra-large breakfast rm w/desk area. Huge great rm has vaulted ceiling, wood floors, wet bar & gas fireplace.Has large laundry rm on main floor + 3 car garage. Includes separate liv room w/wood floors & spacious library. Includes master br, dream master bath w/bay window, plus 3large br. The w/o finished basement is an entertainers delight w/ possible 5thbedroom kitchen & bar area.Outside you have huge deck overlooking gorgeous view of lake patio outside of walk out basement. New furnace2014, roof2009, some newer windows in 2017.original owners. 3chandeliers are excluded. #MLS 217067680



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