





Photo courtesy of Kohler

## Trend Watch

According to Case Design/Remodeling Inc., here are a few of the biggest trends to watch in 2007:

- **Faucets.** Personalized design is aimed at providing homeowners with a relaxing environment while they bathe or shower.
- **Concrete and glass countertops.** Concrete can take any shape, a plus for designers, and it is not as costly as some other natural stone materials. Glass — in all shapes, colors, thicknesses and textures — is also showing up in ultra-modern kitchen designs.
- **Shower seating.** Inspired by upscale spas, seats in showers have become one of the latest trends in master bathrooms.
- **Outdoor kitchens.** Whether built from the ground up or on an existing patio, outdoor kitchens boost resale value and offer limitless possibilities.
- **Energy-efficient materials and appliances.** Windows and doors, washing machines, dishwashers, ranges and refrigerators feature sleek designs, innovation and all the latest amenities to help homeowners become more energy- and resource-efficient and save money.

## Privacy, Please

An open house can be a great way to sell your home. It can also be an open invitation to prying eyes. To keep your personal life, well, personal, here are some steps you can take to snoop-proof your house when prospective buyers are around:

1. Clear away mail and paperwork from all surfaces (desks, countertops, coffee table). Lock up extra-sensitive documents (bank statements, passport, social security card, etc.).
2. Remove diplomas and personal photos from your walls.
3. Store family heirlooms. You don't want your personal effects to distract buyers. A tidy and uncluttered space will help them imagine themselves in the home.
4. Organize closets. Some visitors have no qualms about opening closets and cabinets and peeking into other generally off-limit areas. Be prepared by making sure those hidden areas are in tip-top shape.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Homeowners spend approximately **\$155 billion** annually on renovations.

Source: RealEstateJournal.com

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