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Want to start flipping homes? These are the top states for finding a fixer-upper, a new study says

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Homebuyers seeking a fixer-upper, whether to renovate for themselves or to update and sell for a profit, will want to consider the results of a new study on the best states for flipping a house. The study from home warranty company Cinch Home Services ranks Maine, West Virginia, and New Jersey in the top three spots and is based on an analysis of [Zillow](#) listings.

“Maine has some of the oldest housing stock in the country, with 35% built before 1960—23% before 1940,” Jeff Harris of Harris Real Estate, and the 2025 president of Maine Association of REALTORS, tells *Fortune*. “Because of the lack of housing and affordability, renovating existing housing is a wise and feasible pathway to homeownership.”

We’ll take a closer look at which states made the top 10 list in the study, what specific terms Cinch analyzed Zillow listings to find, and which factors potential buyers should consider before spending the money for a home in one of these states.

Top 10 states for buying fixer-upper homes

The folks at Cinch Home Services analyzed all Zillow listings in each state, searching for nine keywords including “fixer-upper,” “needs some TLC,” and “project home.” They looked at the percentage of listings containing each keyword and then gave each state a score out of 100.

Here are the top 10 states with the most fixer-uppers on the market, along with their scores:

1. Maine (72.98 score)
2. West Virginia (72.42 score)
3. New Jersey (70.36 score)
4. New York (67.43 score)
5. Connecticut (66.82 score)
6. Maryland (65.98 score)
7. Kentucky (65.26 score)
8. Pennsylvania (63.78 score)

9. Michigan (63.48 score)

10. New Hampshire (61.55 score)

“The majority are northeastern states with some of the oldest housing and communities in the nation,” Harris observes. “Most are areas of growth since the pandemic due to a number of driving factors such as remote work options, demand to be near families, affordability, and lifestyle.”

At the opposite end, Wyoming had the fewest listings with terms that indicated fixer-upper homes. It scored just 11.20 on the Cinch scale.

Where to find fixer-uppers in these states

When *Fortune* asked about where such homes are typically located within the top-ranked states, a Cinch spokesperson had this to say:

“It varies by state, but generally, fixer-uppers tend to be more common in rural and suburban areas rather than in major centers. Many are located in small towns and countryside locations, where homes have been passed down for generations but haven’t been modernized. With fixer-uppers in suburban areas, a lot of the time they just need updating to meet today’s buyer expectations.”

What to consider before trying to flip a home

Cinch offered these tips for buyers who are considering getting a house with the intent to flip it:

- Get the property rigorously inspected before you make the purchase.
- Budget 20% to 30% more than you initially think you may need to cover renovation costs as a cushion for potential surprises with plumbing, electricity, or the structure.
- Evaluate which renovations are likely to significantly increase the home's sale price. Cinch provided examples such as kitchen remodels and loft conversions.
- Identify renovations that may cost more than they add in value, and skip them. For example, adding a pool is fun but may not provide the best return on your investment.

The spokesperson also noted that while experienced flippers may be able to turn a home around in six months or less, first-time flippers should generally plan for at least a year.

The takeaway

Harris, who has been a REALTOR since 2004, notes that it makes sense to consider fixer-uppers in states like his own.

“Since 2020, Maine has seen consistent in-migration, and we now have a population that has crested 1.4 million—a first for us,” he says. “With a constrained housing supply, it’s no surprise that more people are opting to purchase older, less ‘move-in ready’ properties in order to make it their own, either to call their home or for investment purposes.”

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