

# RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS

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AURORA/KING

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

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Buying or Selling  
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## New Year brings new market, says top Broker

Rocco Racioppo, a top Remax agent with 40 years of experience, believes we are at a turning point. "Properties will rise over the next 2-5 years as the GTA is still a very desirable destination for foreign buyers and investors. Prices in Toronto and surrounding areas are still low as compared to other world class cities around the world," he points out.

*Continued on page 4*

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## ESSENTIALS FOR A bathroom remodel

What began as a utilitarian space for personal sanitation has, in modern times, transformed into one of the most coveted rooms in the house. Bathrooms have become a place to relax and unwind, and new bathrooms are on the tops of many homeowners' wishlists.

**B**athrooms can be as lavish as budgets allow. Wish lists can include everything from luxurious soaking tubs to rainfall showerheads to chaise lounges to televisions or home entertainment systems contained in the space. Those contemplating their own bathroom renovations may draw inspiration from the following features.

### HOT WATER RECIRCULATION SYSTEM

Few things can be as disappointing as desiring a hot bath or shower only to find that the hot

water tank has been drained. The home remodeling company Normandy Remodeling says that water recirculation systems provide on-demand hot water. In such systems, hot water may continuously run through the pipes or there may be a pump underneath a sink. Either way, one needn't wait for the water to warm up any longer.

### DOUBLE UNDERMOUNT SINKS

Bathroom time is at a premium, especially when people must prepare and leave the house together. Rather than jockeying for position around a single sink, dual sinks enable more breathing room and time efficiency. Undermount sinks are easy to clean because there is no lip around where the sink meets the vanity, preventing the accumulation of grime and gunk.

### GLASS-FREE SHOWER

Soap scum and water deposits can form on shower doors, even for homeowners who are diligent with cleaning. A sizable shower prevents water spray and affords the ability to forgo glass doors or curtains, thereby cutting down on cleaning and making the room feel more modern.

### MULTIHEAD SHOWER

When redoing the shower, account for various shower heads so that the water can cascade across the body more completely. This provides a spa experience at home.

### TOUCHLESS FAUCETS AND SOAP DISPENSERS

These aren't just for public bathrooms anymore. Touchless faucets and dispensers are more sanitary and convenient.

### SEPARATE TOILET ROOM

A shared bath almost necessitates this type of set-up. The toilet is housed inside its own small space and closed away from the rest of the bathroom. It's more private and convenient this way.

### HEATED FLOORING

You need not worry about stepping out of a warm shower onto a cold floor when heated flooring is part of the equation. This option is available in various flooring materials as well.

Remodeling a bathroom boils down to certain coveted features that can really set a space apart.

## Benefits of freestanding tubs

FEW HOME DESIGN elements provide the instant wow factor of freestanding tubs. Freestanding tubs have an air of luxury that can help current homeowners relax, and impress buyers when homes go on the market.

Freestanding tubs are typically made of cast iron or porcelain. The home improvement website HomeAdvisor notes that cast iron is durable and solid and retains heat well, which is great for those who want to spend more than a little time relaxing in a freestanding tub. However, because cast iron is so heavy, installing a cast iron tub may require structural reinforcement of the flooring, which will add to the overall cost of the project.

According to HomeAdvisor, the average cost to install a tub varies widely depending on the type of tub, the materials its made of and other factors, including plumbing and piping. For example, the cost to install a freestanding tub will rise considerably if new plumbing and piping are necessary.

Before purchasing a freestanding tub, homeowners should seek estimates regarding installation, making sure to get them in writing. Contractors will determine if structural reinforcement is necessary and include such costs in their estimates. In addition, make sure to ask contractors to investigate piping and plumbing so no surprises pop up after the tub has been purchased and work has begun.

If estimates from contractors aren't budget busting, homeowners can consider these benefits of freestanding tubs before making their final decisions.

- **CLEANING:** Because they're detached from other bathroom fixtures and not flush against the wall, freestanding tubs tend to be easier to clean than built-in bathtubs. Freestanding tubs are accessible from all sides, making it easy to reach all those nooks and crannies where grime can build up.

- **RETURN ON INVESTMENT:** In its 2018 "Cost vs. Value" report, Remodeling magazine noted that upscale bathroom remodels recouped 56.2 percent of their cost at resale. That was a better return on investment than an upscale kitchen remodel (53.5 percent) and an upscale master suite addition (48.3 percent). The thought of a sizable return on investment can make relaxing in a freestanding tub that much more enjoyable.

- **WARMTH:** Even freestanding tubs made of materials other than cast iron offer great heat retention. Stone resin bathtubs, for example, provide excellent insulation on cold nights. That's ideal for people who want to unwind in the tub without having to exit early because the water has become cold.

Freestanding tubs can transform regular bathrooms into luxurious oases.



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Rocco has sold real estate since September 1980 and specialises in selling high-end homes and country estates in York Region. His in-depth knowledge of the market puts him at a vantage point from where he can observe trends. “There is a lot of optimism regarding the real estate market for 2020. Is it a good time to buy? Is it a good time to sell? Entering 2020, the listing inventory is lower than any time since the boom market of early 2017,” he explained, adding, “In 2016 and the first quarter of 2017, we experienced an extreme ‘sellers’ market.” Very low inventory for the large pool of buyers. Since May 2017, we moved into an extreme ‘buyers’ market” with a high inventory of homes and fewer motivated or qualified buyers in the marketplace. The implementation of the 15 per cent Foreign Buyers tax, combined with the Stress Test for mortgages for home buyers (where buyers have to qualify for mortgages at a rate two per cent higher than the

**“Now is the time for buyers to buy their first home or upgrade to a larger home as the market has already adjusted 30-40 per cent”**

lender’s posted rates) caused this market to be an extreme buyers’ market.”

Having built a reputation for getting top dollar for his listings through specialised knowledge of the high-end niche of the market, Rocco employs unique marketing strategies and has sharp negotiation skills. As a broker with Remax Realtron Realty Inc., Rocco expects that prices will rise

moderately by 3-6 per cent. “We are moving towards a more balanced market. Homes should sell faster than they had between May 1, 2017 and December 31, 2019. This should encourage home sellers. Now is the time for buyers to buy their first home or upgrade to a larger home as the market has already adjusted 30-40 per cent depending on the exact neighbourhood.”

Rocco’s believes York Region is a preferred destination because it is close enough to Toronto and offers a great lifestyle, especially for people who are raising families.

Now is the right time to contact Rocco Racioppo, Broker with Remax Realtron Realty Inc. regarding your real estate plans for the year 2020 and beyond. There is no obligation to have Rocco evaluate your current home and to offer his suggestions on the best strategies for making your move. Contact him directly at 905-841-4787 or send an email to rracioppo@gmail.com



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Published By:



## Improve storage at home

Homes are getting bigger, but it seems like people are still lamenting a lack of storage space.

National Public Radio says the average American home has nearly tripled in size during the last 50 years. Despite that, 10 percent of Americans still need to rent off-site storage, according to a report in the New York Times Magazine. Self-storage facilities are one of the fastest-growing commercial real estate segments, and the Self Storage Association says there are more than 50,000 storage facilities in the U.S. alone. The commercial real estate company CBRE, Ltd., says there are roughly 3,000 self-storage facilities across Canada, and 65 to 85 percent of self-storage tenants are residential users.

Improving storage at home can be a cost-effective alternative to renting storage space. With these easy tips, homeowners can maximize space immediately.

### UTILIZE TRACK STORAGE SYSTEMS

Closets may be plentiful, but if not efficiently utilized, space may still seem lacking. Track closet storage systems often make greater use of closet space than traditional shelf and hanging rod systems. Customizing closets using track systems or other modifications can improve utility of all closets in the house.

### INVEST IN STORAGE BEDS

Storage beds typically feature cubbies or drawers within

a platform-style bed frame. It's a practical home storage solution, and does not require any building.

### THINK VERTICALLY

Maximize spaces by looking up and down for storage possibilities. Items that are not used frequently, such as seasonal decorations or travel suitcases, can be stored in high spaces. Shelving on walls can go as high as necessary and be put to use in awkward wall areas, such as in corners or under eaves.

### INVEST IN STORAGE BENCHES/OTTOMANS

A stopping area inside the front door replete with a storage bench can house shoes, umbrellas, hats, backpacks, and other items, keeping them tidy and out of sight. In living rooms, look for chests or ottomans that are decorative and functional. Store throw blankets or board games inside.

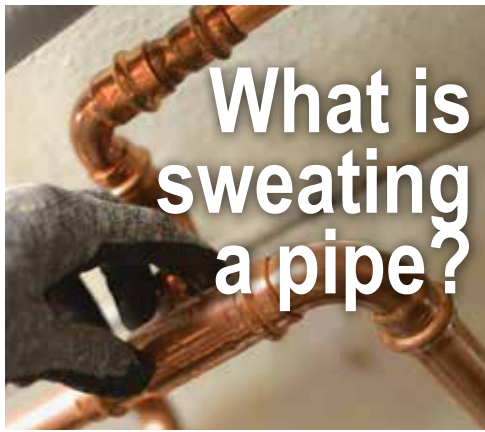
### RECESS DRAWERS OR SHELVES

Gain more storage by recessing a chest of drawers into what is called the “knee wall” of homes that have sloped ceilings in attics and upstairs bedrooms. Utilize these short walls in an efficient manner by sinking drawers or shelves into them, without taking up floor space.

### RAFTER SHELVING

While in the attic (or a garage), add hanging shelves to rafters or exposed beams to create off-the-floor storage as well.

These are just a few of the handy ways to improve the interior storage space in a home.



# What is sweating a pipe?

Copper plumbing long has been a standard in home construction.

Anyone who has a home with copper pipes should have an understanding of how to make repairs in the case of a leak or if modifications need to be made. "Sweating pipes" is one term homeowners may hear when maintaining their pipes.

Sweating a pipe refers to soldering a pipe or the joint. Sweating seals a new joint or mends a fault. When sweating a pipe, it is important to do the job correctly so that a soldered pipe can last for years and years.

PlanItDIY, a source for how-to advice, says that sweating pipes involves some key steps.

- Cut the pipes to the right length using a copper tube cutter or hacksaw.
- Use a file or wire brush to remove burs and smooth down the ends.
- Clean the end of the copper pipe with a cleaning brush until the surface is bright all around. In addition, clean the inside of all fittings.
- Brush plumbing flux on the brushed surfaces and assemble the joint. The how-to resource Hunker says flux is an acidic paste applied to all of the pieces of copper that you want to connect together. The flux paste will draw in the solder after the pipe is heated using a blow torch. The acid in the flux attracts the solder into the seam between the two copper pieces and fills the gap while creating a semi-permanent bond between the pieces.
- To create the seal, move the flame around the joint to heat it evenly. The copper will get shiny, and the flux will melt. When the pipe begins to dull and the flux sizzles and smokes, it is time to apply solder. Touch lead-free plumbing solder to the joint and apply more heat.
- The sweating process is finished when the solder bubbles out of the end of the seam. Let cool and the joint should now be water-tight.

Sweating pipes gets easier with practice. DIYers who are nervous about plumbing projects that involve sweating can be reassured there are connection products available that are used in lieu of flux and solder. These push-to-connect fittings seal joints as well.

Individuals can speak with experts at hardware and home improvement stores to find the best products for their needs and skill levels.



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## Low Home inventory Persists

Home values rose by nearly 5 per cent in Aurora based on the 46 homes that sold in the month of December of 2019. If we take a more impartial view of the numbers by removing the highest and lowest sale that happened in December the median price was \$844,225 compared to \$806,500 from a year ago. At the current rate of home purchasing demand in Aurora, it could take 3.3 months to go through the current supply of all home types for sale. There is 37 per cent less selection available on the market year over year making it a Seller's market. As of January 1st, 2020 there were 122 homes of all types for sale. The average days it took to sell a property in Aurora in December was 46 taking into consideration that some properties are taken on and off the market in a given month. Sellers typically received 98 per cent of their asking price

Sales above \$2,000,000 continue to be slower as lending qualification guidelines have remained stricter. In all of 2019 there were 19 sales above \$2M in Aurora which is 1 more than in 2018. In King 45 homes sold above \$2,000,000, 138 in Richmond

Hill, 72 in Markham, 94 in Vaughan, 27 in Stouffville and a total of 5 across Newmarket, East Gwillimbury and Georgina combined. There was an 11.5 per cent increase in home sales year over year while average pricing came out marginally higher in 2019 at \$906,316.

Call a REALTOR® today to discuss the value of homes in the neighbourhood and to provide the valuable information contained in a home Seller's or Buyer's guide.

– Written by Connie Power

Connie Power Assistant Manager - Sales Representative  
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\*The statistics provided herein were obtained from the Toronto Real Estate Board; Regional Housing Market Tables; York Region, Aurora for December 2018, 2019 and the December Summary of Existing Home Transactions of all home types 2018, 2019 for all TREB Areas.

\*\*\*Not intended to solicit those currently under a real estate contract.

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## How to choose the right window treatments for your home

Plantation shutters? Mini-blinds? Cafe curtains? Formal draperies? Homeowners' options in regard to window treatments for their homes are extensive, which can make outfitting home interiors challenging for novice decorators.

Some people do not pay a lot of attention to window treatments, failing to realize just how great an impact the right window treatments can have on a space. According to the design experts at Hunter Douglas, window treatments are often an after-thought because residents may not consider them necessities. As a result, homeowners may install whatever is on hand or accept window treatments that came with a house or apartment. But ignoring window treatments, especially when they can fulfill certain needs, is a missed design opportunity.

One of the first steps to choosing window treatments is determining your end goal. Is privacy your main goal? Are you seeking more natural light in a room? Is there too much light and you need to darken the room? Window treatments can serve multiple functions, and some treatments may make better fits depending on homeowners' ultimate goals.

### SEMI-SHEER WINDOW TREATMENTS

Semi-sheer window treatments are often fabric and can help brighten rooms with natural light but offer little privacy. They're usually appropriate for spaces where people gather, such as living rooms, dens or dining rooms. Semi-sheer curtains may be paired with another complementary window treatment so privacy can be customized as needed. For example, sheer curtains let light into a bedroom, but shades can be drawn at night.

### MAXIMUM PRIVACY

Bedrooms, work spaces or bathrooms can benefit from extra privacy. While some people may think that privacy comes at the cost of light, that's not always the case.

Functional curtain panels can be drawn closed when privacy is desired and then opened to let in light. The thickness of the fabric will also dictate the amount of privacy the panels create.

Tiers are hung on a short rod-pocket panel and usually cover the lower one-third of a window. They're popular choices to let light in from the top, but obscure views from the bottom portion of the window.

Cellular shades are another option that provide privacy but still let light in. Cellular shades come in hard and fabric varieties and their use depends on the room. Many cellular shades are constructed with a honeycomb design, offers the design resource Houzz, so they can insulate as well as decorate windows.

### BLACKOUT SHADES/SHUTTERS

Perfect for rooms where babies nap, shift workers rest during daylight hours or external lights, such as that from a street lamp, need to be blocked out, blackout shades do just what their name implies. A dense fabric lining helps keep light out entirely.

Shutters also can block out light but add to the character of the room. They can be painted a bright color to make a statement or match wall colors to blend in seamlessly.

When selecting window treatments, shoppers can choose retail options or custom treatments. Many designers recommend custom window treatments because they are measured, manufactured and installed specifically for homeowners' windows. However, there are many DIY options available at budget-friendly retailers.

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## Ask Big Tuna, The Renovating Realtor



By Julien Laurion  
The Big Tuna of Real Estate



Dear Julien, I may have to relocate for my work and if I do, I cannot afford to keep my property here in Aurora and another in the new city. This makes me kind of nervous because if I have to list my property it will not be in one of the 'hot' markets. Could you provide some insight? Thank you in advance,  
Cookie Monster

Cookie Monster, are congratulations in order? I hope that this potential relocation is something you are looking forward to!

Yes, that is true, while listing your home in January, February or March may not be the 'hot' time to buy and sell in cold climates, such as Aurora, I would not be discouraged. Historically, and logically, sellers prefer to list their homes during the peak market time. For example the spring and fall months. However, the market right now is quite different than in the past. The demand for affordable homes is HIGH! Supply is dwindling all around the GTA and in turn, this is driving home prices up. Compared to 2018 the amount of properties that were listed at this time is down by 18%. It was a buyer's market last year where supply exceeded demand and we are now seeing a trend towards a

seller's market once again.

Properties that are priced right, well maintained and are located in good neighbourhoods are selling at strong prices regardless of when the home is listed. Comparing December 2018 to 2019, the average home sale price grew by 11.9% and there were 17.4% more homes sold. These numbers should be encouraging to you! While life does not always line up perfectly to market trends, if you have to list in the calmer time of the year, given the current trends, you will get top dollar for your home.

If you need to sell, give me a call and we can discuss all the options. You will have a lot of things you will need to worry about with relocating and you should work with a Realtor who can take the stress out of selling your home. Let me do that heavy lifting! Good luck.

## Who is Big Tuna, The Renovating Realtor?

Julien Laurion AKA Big Tuna, is a local Real Estate Sale Representative with RE/MAX Hallmark York Group Realty in Aurora.

I am a real estate agent who has expertise in both Real Estate and Renovations and have been involved in this community for over 20 years.

If you have a question for my monthly article or if you are considering buying, selling or leasing a home please feel free to call or email me directly at (416) 402-5530 or julien@bigtuna.ca or by alternatively visiting my website [www.bigtuna.ca](http://www.bigtuna.ca) or Facebook page @bigtunarealty

# Did you Know?

According to the home improvement resource HomeAdvisor, adding square footage to a home can cost homeowners anywhere from \$7,000 to \$100,000.

When adding square footage to a home, homeowners may need to knock down an interior wall or walls, the cost of which can vary widely depending on the walls being knocked down. Load-bearing walls are needed to support the home, and while such walls can be removed, homeowners may need to hire structural engineers at additional cost to orchestrate such removals. In addition, homeowners can expect to pay more when knocking down walls that contain ducts or electrical wiring. It also can be costly for homeowners whose homes are old to knock down walls. HomeAdvisor notes that the wall-removal process in old homes that contain lead paint or lath-and-plaster walls is more intricate and may cost homeowners more money.



I HAVE QUALIFIED BUYERS FOR PROPERTIES IN KING!

*Julianne Boileau*  
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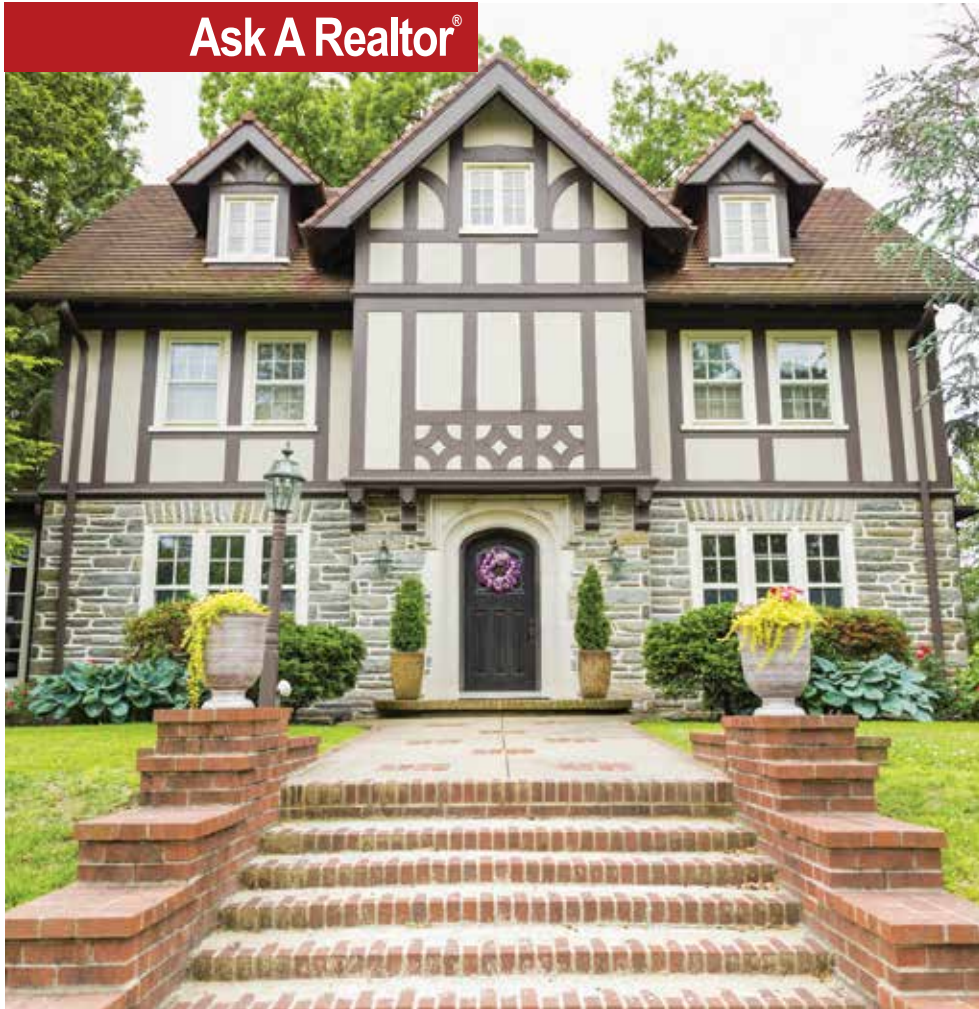


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## Ask A Realtor®



## We saw a house on MLS® for sale but it's above the amount we are pre-qualified for, should we still go see it?

The answer depends on the motivation of the Sellers to actually sell their home. When working with a set approved and preferred budget from clients REALTORS® may expand the search to include a selection of homes slightly above the target budget. The reason is often because a home may be priced a little higher than the market demand to try the higher price first before the home is priced at market value. Even if Buyers don't end up viewing any homes above their budget, seeing what's available brings a level of consciousness to the current inventory of homes and in the event of a price reduction Buyers would likely take swifter action to see those homes.

Prior to any offers being made a REALTOR® would provide a comparative market analysis and share broader statistics and features and benefits regarding the location of the home as well as drawbacks. Further investigation of the home itself, including upgrades, improvements, features and size along with neighbourhood home analysis will help Buyers agents' share whether the home appears to be priced below market value, at market value or above market value.

If there is a conclusion that the home is priced above market value a REALTOR® may be able to successfully negotiate the price lower to within their Buyers approved budget. The benefit would be that the Sellers may agree to the sale knowing fully well that the selling price was a little high based on similar market assessments.

Like the old saying goes, "you can't get what you don't ask for." Negotiation is not about wasting anybody's time but rather that all parties come to a mutually agreed upon outcome and communicate together on the path towards a successful transaction. Call an Accredited Buyer's Specialist (ABR®) today to create a comprehensive, custom Buyer's Action Plan for 2020 today.

– Written by Connie Power

Connie Power Assistant Manager, Sales Representative  
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**SOLD**

**30 Dennison Street, King City**

Magnificent family home with over 5300 sq.ft. of living space and a chalet feeling right in the heart of King City!!! Take in the soaring cathedral ceiling and floor to ceiling stone gas fireplace, hand scraped hardwood & travertine floors, gourmet kitchen with breakfast bar, granite counters, pantry and stainless steel appliances. Custom built to perfection, this home features a home office with separate entrance, a spacious main floor master bedroom with walk out to cozy deck overlooking the yard and salt water pool. Love to entertain? The basement is quite the party hub with a walkout to yard and pool, large recreation room, bar, home gym and nannies quarters!! Call Ana Pronio, Broker of Record for your private tour!!



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