

# Fall 2020

## Home Improvement



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# What to do to prepare your garden for winter

Gardens provide an idyllic escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. In fact, many gardening enthusiasts typically cannot wait for the spring thaw so they can spend the next several months tending to their plants under the warm sun. But a gardener's work is never truly done, and the work to make gardens stun in the spring actually begins during the preceding fall.

Preparing gardens for winter is an important step that can help homeowners ensure their gardens return to full strength in the spring. The tasks necessary to prepare gardens for winter may depend on what homeowners are planting, but the following are some general maintenance

suggestions that can keep gardens safe this winter.

- **Remove weeds and debris.** Weeds and debris are unsightly and detrimental to plant life in spring, but they also can be harmful in the winter. Weeds and debris left to linger in gardens through the winter provide overwintering spots for insects and can contribute to disease. So it's imperative that weeds and debris are removed before the ground hardens in winter. Don't wait until the ground hardens, as that can make it hard to remove the roots of weeds, adversely affecting the garden as a result.

- **Prepare the soil.** The Farmer's Almanac advises homeowners to gently till the soil in their gardens so

they can expose any insects before they settle in for the winter. Once garden soil is exposed, add a layer of compost, leaves, aged manure, and, if necessary, lime, gently tilling it into the soil. According to the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, the only accurate way to determine if lawn or garden soil needs lime is to test it. Lime makes soil less acidic and reduces soil pH. Low soil pH makes it hard for certain plants to grow, but acidic soil is ideal when growing blueberries. Test the soil for lime and amend it depending on what you hope to grow in the spring so it's ready to thrive when winter ends.

- **Remove dead or diseased plants.** Dead or dis-

eased plants should not be left in the garden through the winter. These plants can attract insects and are vulnerable to disease, which can make it hard for the garden to thrive in the spring.

- **Protect fruit trees.** If you have fruit trees, install mouse guards around the base to prevent mice and voles from killing the trees over the winter. If left to their own devices over the winter, mice and voles may eat the bark of fruit trees, killing the trees as a result. The Farmer's Almanac notes that mouse guards made of fine mesh hardware cloth can effectively protect fruit trees from hungry mice and voles over the winter.



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# Get ahead of chimney repair this season

Woodburning fireplaces or fuel stoves can add warmth and ambiance to a home. These appliances are particularly coveted in the cooler months when people spend more time indoors. Maintenance is necessary in order for fireplaces and stoves to function safely, and that upkeep must include paying close attention to the functionality of the chimney.

Chimneys are designed to last for decades. Cracks and spalling in brick chimneys are common concerns that can cause significant damage if left unchecked.

Chimney maintenance involves more than cleaning the flue. Rather than running the risk of costly repairs, which can cost several thousand dollars, homeowners can take some simple steps to keep their chimneys in tip-top shape. Certain components of chimney maintenance are do-it-yourself tasks, while others may be better left to the professionals.

- **Start from the inside and ensure that dampers are working properly.** When using fireplaces and other appliances, dampers need to be open to allow smoke to vent outside; otherwise, smoke will be trapped in the home and could lead to carbon monoxide buildup. Dampers need to be fixed or replaced if they are not operational. Replacement fireplace dampers should be snug and not have any gaps, states Vertical Chimney Care.

- **Conduct a visual inspection of the chimney to check for any cracks or spalling.** Spalling is the wearing away of masonry due to water, weather and time. If enough of the material erodes, that erosion can adversely affect the structural integrity of the chimney. Some repairs can be made by patching up cracks or replacing missing bricks. Chimney tuckpointing is the process of repairing mortar.

- **Think about waterproofing the chimney to prevent damage.** A water sealant applied to the outside of the chimney can prevent moisture from breaking down the masonry.

- **Inspect and replace the chimney cap if it is worn out.** A chimney cap is a contraption that sits atop the chimney to allow the smoke to vent while also preventing critters and water from going inside the flue, helping to extend the flue life. The chimney cap attaches to the flue liner, so outside dimensions should be taken to ensure the cap is the right size for the chimney.

- **Have the chimney swept.** Sweeping helps remove the soot and debris that clings to the inside of the flue, known as creosote. The amount of time the fireplace is used will determine how often the chimney must be cleaned. Generally speaking, the chimney liner needs to be cleaned if it has 1/8-inch or more of soot.



Regular inspection and maintenance can help keep a chimney working safely for decades. For those who do not like working at such an elevation, leave exterior chimney repair to a certified professional.



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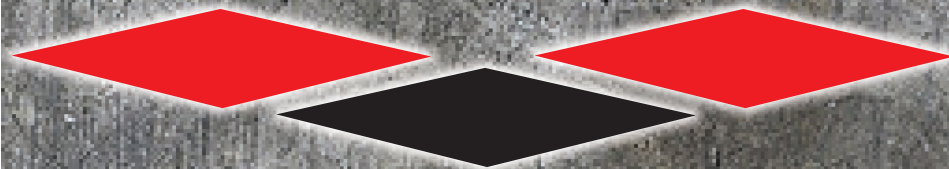


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Moving into a new home can be exciting. Certain touches can help make the new space feel more like home.



# Turn your new house into a home

Historically low mortgage interest rates are helping to drive a new wave of home sales. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicates roughly 14% of the population, or around 40 million people, move every year for various reasons. Statistics Canada's Canadian Housing Survey found about half of Canadian households have either moved within the past five years or intend to do so within the next five.

While people may be inclined to move far from their current residences, the moving resource Move.org notes that some U.S. states are seeing an influx in people leaving while others are absorbing new residents. Illinois, Alaska, New Jersey, New York, and West Virginia are the top five states Americans are leaving, while Idaho, Nevada, Arizona, Oregon, and Montana are gaining residents.

People relocate for various reasons. After moving into a new house, it can take some effort to turn that house into a true home and feel comfortable in your new environs. These steps can help that process along.

- Create at least one complete and serene space. Focus on setting up the bedroom so

you can retreat at the end of the day. Invest in new furniture or get new bedding to give the room this comforting feeling.

- Create an organizational plan. It can be tempting to want to throw everything in closets and unpack quickly, but give yourself time to fully analyze where you want to store items, where you may need to paint or reconfigure spaces, as well as any home improvements you want to make before taking out all of your stuff. When you fully unpack, you can immediately enjoy your hard work.

- Hang artwork. Hang a few select pieces of artwork or family photos shortly after moving in. Surround yourself with things that make you feel good.

- Bring mementos. Your first home may bring about warm feelings. While you can't recreate it entirely, you can use a piece of furniture or a few family heirlooms to make your new space feel homey.

- Rely on familiar scents. Break in the new space with familiar aromas, whether it's preferential air fresheners, scented candles or baking your favorite chocolate chip cookie recipe.

## Preparing your home for the next natural disaster

We all want our homes to be safe, comforting spaces that offer refuge and protection from the outside world. The global pandemic has taught us this, as well as the importance of preparation – not just for illness – but also for natural disasters like fires, floods, earthquakes, and tornados.

Making sure your house is a secure and resilient structure is critical no matter where you live, as global warming has altered the climates and weather events of many regions. Fortunately, thanks to advances in design and innovative materials, building a

stronger, disaster-proof home is possible.

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## Establish winter habitats for backyard animals



Leave some wild areas of the backyard so animals can roost safely during the winter.

Preparing a property for winter involves putting away lawn furniture, raking leaves and removing any annual plants that have shriveled up and

spent the last of their energy. It can be tempting to want to clean up completely and leave a blank slate in the yard. But by doing so, you may be robbing wildlife of the resources they need to overwinter.

The nature and conservation resource In Habitat says plants and animals depend on one another to survive. During the winter, animals may struggle to find adequate shelter and food, especially when there is a lack of sufficient plant matter available. In turn, these animals may actually take up home in people's

residences, turning into pests in the process. Bats, field mice and even opossums and raccoons may move indoors into attics or basements, leaving behind waste and damage if they can't find adequate shelter outdoors.

Homeowners concerned about potential pest infestations can take steps to ensure animals have places to bed down and escape the cold in their yards this winter. These tips can help local wildlife when the temperatures dip.

• **Leave parts of the yard wild.** Animals can make a nest in leaves or piles of brushwood. Just make sure piles left out are away from the home so curious critters don't try to get inside. Leave the task of tidying up shrubs and garden borders until spring, as shrubs can be dense areas to hide for both insects and animals.

• **Consider planting animal food sources prior to winter.** Plants like el-

derberry, holly, mulberry, sumac, and crabapple will grow in colder months and animals can enjoy them as a vital food staple.

• **Don't forget water sources.** Provide access to fresh water and replace as needed if the water freezes. For homeowners with fish ponds in their backyards, use a hot pot to melt a hole in the top of the pond and allow gases that have accumulated underneath to escape. This allows oxygen to reach fish and frogs in the pond.

• **Leave bird, squirrel or bat houses in the yard.** This is a fun and crafty project that can ward off winter boredom while also providing a safe place for local wildlife to shelter in winter.

Animals and insects need some extra help staying comfortable when cool temperatures arrive. Leaving some clean-up tasks for the spring ensures that there are plenty of backyard habitats available to local wildlife.

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## Safe and effective ways to clean up leaves

Removing leaves from the yard is a task that homeowners must perform each fall. Thousands upon thousands of leaves can drop from a single tree. Multiply that by the number of trees on a property, and it's no surprise the task of leaf cleanup can seem so daunting. Furthermore, not all leaves are shed at the same time, so several cleanup sessions may be necessary before the last leaf is banished from the yard.

Just like removing snow, leaf cleanup can be a taxing job if done by hand. For people unaccustomed to exercise, cleaning up leaves can turn into quite a workout. According to the Discovery Health Calorie Counter, raking leaves for one hour can burn nearly 292 calories. Shoulders and arms will feel the burn. Raking leaves is considered moderate physical activity, similar to brisk walking. Those who find themselves straining or out of breath should take a break, and these tips also make the job safer and easier.

- **Wear layers when cleaning up leaves.**

It may be cool at first, but it's easy to work up a sweat after raking for awhile. Layers can be peeled off so as not to get overheated

or risk hypothermia from sweating in chilly temps.

- **Pay attention to your posture while raking.** James Weinstein, chairman of the Department of Orthopedics at Dartmouth Medical School, recommends forming a wide base with the feet and holding the rake slightly toward the end of the handle with one hand three-quarters of the way down the handle from the other. Do not twist the spine; move your entire body. Avoid overuse of muscles on one side of the body by switching sides periodically.

- **Do not try to rake or blow leaves on windy days.** Wind will only make the task that much more difficult, which could lead to overworking oneself.

- **Avoid overfilling bags.** For those who plan to mulch and bag leaves, remember that compressed leaves can get heavy pretty quickly. Do not over-fill bags, as they can be hard to move or bring to a recycling center.

Using a leaf blower to push leaves into piles will reduce the strenuousness of the task, but leaf blowers can be heavy and noisy and gas-powered blowers can produce a considerable amount of exhaust.



**Raking leaves can be quite a chore. It is important that homeowners take steps to prevent injury while cleaning up leaves in their yards.**



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# How to design a fitness room at home

People exercise for many different reasons. Exercise can improve one's appearance, reduce the risk for illness, alleviate stress or anxiety, and even help pass some time. Exercise is often a social activity, but in the wake of social distancing guidelines issued in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, many people have found themselves looking for ways to exercise at home.

Building a home fitness room has never been a more timely project, and such a project can continue to provide rewards even when life returns to some semblance of normalcy. Here's how to successfully stock a home gym.

• **Find a dedicated space.** A home gym will be limited by the amount of space that can be devoted to workouts. Possible

fitness room locations include a spare bedroom, a garage, a basement, or an enclosed patio. Measure the space so you can pick and choose equipment that will fit. Leave some floor space empty for movement exercises or mat activities.

• **Keep the space bright.** Darkness can sap energy levels, so invest in mirrors and adequate overhead lighting to make the space inviting. Natural light can make the exercise area more enjoyable.

• **Consider the flooring.** New flooring can protect against damage and make an area more conducive to working out. Rubber mats can offset echoes and reduce the noise of running on a treadmill or setting down heavy weights.

• **Use space-saving equipment.** A home gym space will

likely not be as expansive as the space inside a traditional fitness center. Thankfully, many activities do not require a lot of space or equipment. Classic exercises like squats, lunges, push ups, and sit ups require little gear but still produce results. Figure out which equipment you like the most and invest in two or three key pieces. Dumbbells of various weights, a medicine ball and a yoga mat can be all you need to create a versatile, effective workout. A TRX system and a door-mounted pull-up bar also are great space-saving options.

• **Have a TV hookup.** A home gym may benefit from a smart TV that you can use to stream workout videos or catch up on the latest news while running the treadmill or using the stationary bike.



A home gym is beneficial year-round, and can be especially valuable when social distancing guidelines are put in place.



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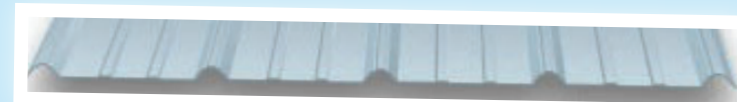


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# *Spruce up a home's exterior with new paint*

## Dugan's offers painting advice

**By Faith Bemiss**

fbemiss@sedaliademocrat.com

As the weather cools down, fall is a good time to think about painting the exterior of one's home, and it's best to get advice from an expert before tackling the project.

Steve Sobaski, paint manager with Dugan's Paint & Flooring Co. in Sedalia, said during the fall many people take advantage of good weather to begin outside paint projects.

"They want to get it done before it gets cold outside," he added. "And we have a complete line of exterior paints and stains by Benjamin Moore."

"This is where we have always shined with the do-it-yourselfer," he continued. "We can offer the right advice and the right product for your project."

Sobaski said Dugan's, which has been in business in Sedalia for nearly 150 years, has designers on staff who can help answer

questions and help with color selections.

"When a person comes into our store, they (the staff) helps from the beginning to the end of the project," he said.

Sobaski added due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the store offers free delivery inside the city limits and also curbside pickup, although he added people are welcome to come inside Dugan's.

"Paint is a much bigger world than people could ever imagine," Sobaski, who has been with Dugan's for two decades, said. "But even at 20 years, I learn new things every day."

As for selecting an outdoor color, he noted most people tend to move toward earthen colors for exterior house painting. He suggested the Benjamin Moore Historical Collection which specializes in neutral, earthy colors.

"When people come to the store, many times they have an idea on the house



PHOTO BY FAITH BEMISS | DEMOCRAT

**Steve Sobaski, the paint manager at Dugan's Paint & Flooring Co., points to earthen paint colors by Benjamin Moore available for exterior painting this fall. Dugan's has been in business for nearly 150 years and has been owned for six generations by members of the Kempton family.**

color and Benjamin Moore provides a nice range of color," he said.

He said prepping the home's exterior is important before beginning a paint project.

"People come in and they have questions about the best surface prep, the best primer, techniques

and top coats," Sobaski said. "We are very knowledgeable and the staff can help guide people through projects so it turns out right the first time. We provide all that assistance."

He added Dugan's also provides technical staff who can guide people through the proper surface

prep and proper application.

"As far as exterior home fall improvement, and as far as being a Benjamin Moore dealer, Dugan's has a proprietary tinting system for paint, that provides for the best color attention of exterior paint that the industry has to

offer," Sobaski said.

"It's actually called Gennex (Colorant Advantage)," he continued. "It's like tinting paint with paint. So, our color adds to the quality and longevity of our exterior paints."

*Faith Bemiss can be reached at 660-530-0289 or on Twitter @flbemiss.*



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# Laundry room renovations you'll love

Does it seem like your hamper is always full and the washing machine is running constantly? You may not be imagining it. Laundry Butler for You, a wash, dry and fold service, says the average household washes 50 pounds of laundry a week and 6,000 articles of clothing every year. Families with children at home are doing laundry most often, and those with pets may find there is ample laundry to wash as well.

With so much laundry being generated, homeowners may want to consider paying extra attention to the space in the house where their clothing is being cleansed. Laundry room renovations may not top homeowners' priority lists, but it may be time to give these rooms another look.

## Assess your equipment

If your appliances are aging, a laundry room renovation can start with an investment in new appliances. New models have large capacity loads, tend to be energy-efficient and could

have innovative features that help fit with your laundry lifestyle. Purchasing front-loading models also can free up design space, as you can install a counter directly above the units, saving room for other items like drying racks.

## Figure out your room needs

A laundry room need not be limited to laundry only. Many homeowners make large laundry rooms catch-all spaces that can serve as utility or mud rooms, pantry overflows, or off-season storage areas. Consider the functions you want the room to serve and include those ideas in your designs.

## Add some natural light

If possible, include a window in your laundry room. Natural light can help make the room more enjoyable. It also can help you identify stains on clothes that need to be addressed and make it easier to fold matching items like socks.

## Think about a utility sink

Many washing machines drain out

directly to waste pipes in the floor or wall, but you also can opt to have them empty into a utility sink.

This sink also provides a convenient place to hand-wash items, clean tools or paintbrushes, or store items that perhaps you do not want to bring into a bathroom or kitchen sink.

## Include some flair

This utilitarian space need not be boring or bereft of design elements. Mirror your home's style in the laundry room, and include wall hangings, plants, accent items, and even task lighting. Play up certain features with a bold floor tile or brightly colored walls.



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# Signs your gutters are in need of repair

Fall is a great time to tackle projects around the house. The weather each fall allows homeowners to make improvements to their homes' exteriors without worrying about extreme heat or cold, while interior projects like painting are made easier because homeowners can open the windows to allow for proper ventilation.

Fall also marks a great time to prepare for upcoming projects that can make winter work that much easier. For example, fall is a great time to take stock of your gutters so you can address any issues before leaves begin to fall or the first snowstorm touches down. Compromised gutters can contribute to water issues in basements and adversely affect a home's foundation if not addressed immediately, so it behooves homeowners to learn the signs that gutters are in need of repair or replacement.

• **Gutters hanging off the home:** Gutters were once installed predominantly with spikes. However, many industry professionals now install gutters with hanger brackets. Why the change? Spikes loosen over time, leading to the gutters hanging off the home. That can contribute to serious issues if left untreated. Gutters hanging off the home need not necessarily be replaced, but rather secured to the home, ideally with hanger brackets instead of spikes. Brackets hook into the front of the gutter and are then screwed into the fascia of a home. A professional who specializes in

gutter repair can perform this task relatively quickly, and it's an inexpensive yet highly effective solution.

• **Gutter separation:** Gutters that are no longer fastened together can leak and contribute to issues that affect the home's foundation, siding and appearance. Clogs and the accumulation of debris can cause gutters to separate because they are not designed to hold too much weight. Replacement of separated gutters may or may not be necessary depending on how big the problem is and the condition of the existing gutters. If replacement is not necessary, separated gutters may be remedied by securing the joints, another relatively simple and inexpensive fix.

• **Peeling exterior paint:** Paint that appears to be peeling off of your home may indicate that water is seeping over the edge of the gutter closest to your home. When that happens, water is coming down the side of the house, causing the paint to peel. In such instances, replacing the gutters is often necessary.

• **Basement flooding:** Not all signs of deteriorating gutters are outside a home. Many a homeowner has been flummoxed by flooding in their basements, and such flooding can be caused by aging, ineffective gutters. That's because deteriorating gutters sometimes allow water to leak near the foundation of a home, contributing to basement flooding.



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Vegetable gardens need not cease when the last days of summer vanish. Fall produce is delicious and can be easily planted and harvested even after the first frost.

# Tips for planting fall vegetables

Tending to backyard vegetable gardens can fill many hours of enjoyable downtime in the great outdoors. What's more, the bounty produced by such gardens provides healthy, fresh foods to gardeners and their loved ones.

Although spring and summer are widely seen as the peak of gardening season, the mild temperatures of autumn can be a prime time for planting vegetables as well. Certain late-season treats like carrots, kale, spinach, and turnips can thrive in fall gardens. Many different foods are quick crops that can go from seed to table in about six weeks. When sown in early fall, these vegetables will be ready to put on the table for

mid-October feasts. Beets, green onions, broccoli, and cabbages can be planted in late summer for fall harvest. Gardeners who live in hardiness zones eight through 10 (the southern portion of the United States) can plant fall vegetables as late as December. Many of these plants can tolerate light frost, which may even help sweeten the vegetables.

A handful of unique factors need to be taken into consideration when planning fall vegetable gardens.

- The summertime location of the garden may still be adequate, but be sure to choose a location that gets eight full hours of sunlight per day.

- If using an existing garden site, clear out any detritus from summer plants and any weeds that have sprouted. If you are planting a new garden, remove any turf before tilling the soil.

- Amend the soil with sand, compost, manure fertilizer, and any other nutrients needed depending on the types of vegetables you intend to grow.

- While fall vegetables can be grown successfully from seeds, it may be more time-friendly to work from larger transplants, advises the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension.

- Some plants may need a little protection as they grow if temperatures begin to dip. Cover with a blanket, cardboard box or plastic tunnel to insulate.

Remember to water according to the vegetables planted and to keep an eye on readiness for vegetables. Turnips, beets, rutabagas, and carrots can be dug out when the roots are plump and crisp.

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## Understanding R-Values

Insulation recommendations are based on certain factors that coordinate with regional climate zones to increase energy efficiency. These factors are known as R-values. The R in R-value stands for “resistance,” and refers to how certain products resist the flow of heat through walls, floors and ceilings. Products should reduce heat escape so heat is kept on the right side of the wall. In summer this means outdoors, in winter it means indoors. R-values relate not only to insulation, but also to walls, windows and other barriers. R-values also coordinate to the type, thickness and density of the material being used. The higher the R-value, the more resistant to heat the product is. The U.S. Department of Energy coordinates R-value to climate zones 1 through 7 (1: Tip of Florida; 7: Canadian border). A higher R-value is needed in Zone 7 and a lower R-value is necessary in Zone 1. Those embarking on home improvement projects that involve choosing between R-values are urged to speak with a professional or to visit the Department of Energy website ([www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)) to determine which R-Value is ideal for their homes.

# How home design trends are evolving for *social distancing*

COVID-19 has brought changes to everything, and home design is no exception. Experts are expecting to see lasting impacts on everything from the materials we use to the rooms we prioritize. Check out these and other noteworthy trends:

**Houses over apartments:** Many people who live in condos or apartments do so to be closer to the action — work, entertainment and shops — and never planned on spending much time at home. But the pandemic has changed that, and more people are going to want a home that offers plenty of room and outdoor space in case they need to self-isolate again.

**Self-sufficiency:** A hard lesson we’ve learned is that things and services we thought we could count on aren’t necessarily a sure thing, so items that increase self-reliance will become very popular. Expect to see more homes with sources of energy like solar panels, sources of heat like fireplaces and stoves, and even urban and indoor gardens that allow you to grow your own produce.

**Outdoor living:** Between playgrounds closing and

parks becoming overcrowded, many of us are turning to our balconies, patios and backyards for fresh air and nature. This means we’re going to be investing more in our outdoor spaces, with functional kitchens, soothing water features, cozy firepits, and high-quality outdoor furniture to create a much-needed escape.

**Healthier spaces:** Thanks to spending more time indoors and reprioritizing our health, we’ll turn to design to help ensure our homes are safe and healthy for our families. We’ll see a rise in products like water filtration systems as well as materials that improve indoor air quality. For new homes and additions, alternatives to wood-framing like insulated concrete forms from Nudura, which offer improved ventilation for healthier indoor air quality and an environment



that’s less susceptible to mold, will be key.

**Home office space:** Business experts are suggesting many companies will see that working from home is not only possible but offers tangible benefits, like saving money on office space rent. With working from home on the rise, creating a home office space that inspires productivity will be a major project many of us tackle. Luxury home office furniture that feels chic and blends into your décor as well

as ergonomic chairs and desks will see a major boost.

**Custom and quality:** With the hit to the economy, people are going to be buying less, but what they do buy will be better quality, while at the same time making an effort to support American businesses. When it comes to design, trends will shift to locally made furniture, custom-built homes and pieces and materials that stand the test of time.

Find more information at [nudura.com](http://nudura.com).



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# Options abound when shopping for home siding

Home improvement projects run the gamut from minor repairs to complete overhauls. Replacing exterior siding is one of the most significant home improvement projects homeowners can undertake. Such a project can give homes a completely new look, which is why choice of siding is such an important decision.

Homeowners have many siding options to choose from, and the following guide can help them make the best choice for their homes.

## Vinyl siding

Vinyl siding is easily maintained and among the more budget-friendly sid-

ing options. According to the home improvement resource HomeAdvisor, vinyl siding is made from a PVC plastic that does not rot or flake. Siding professionals note that the technology used to create vinyl siding has changed considerably in recent years, making this option more diverse than traditional vinyl siding. So homeowners turned off by the potentially plastic look of vinyl siding might be surprised at how different modern vinyl siding looks compared to the vinyl siding of yesteryear.

## Fiber-cement siding

The home improvement television network HGTV

notes that fiber-cement siding has grown in popularity among homeowners in recent years. This material does not require much maintenance and it's non-flammable and resistant to termites. HomeAdvisor notes that fiber-cement siding can create the look of wood, stucco or masonry, making it a versatile option capable of creating various looks. In addition, fiber-cement siding is known for its durability, with some products coming with warranties lasting as long as 50 years.

## Wood siding

Homeowners have many choices if they prefer wood siding on their homes. Cedar, cypress, fir, pine, and spruce are just a handful of the many wood siding options home-

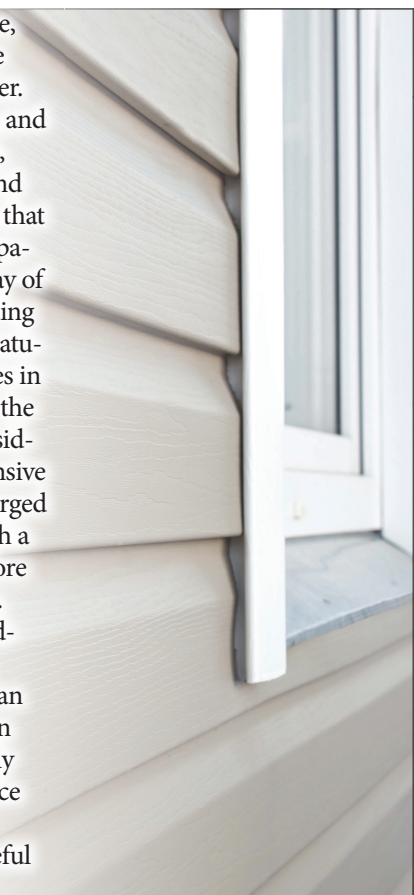
owners can choose from. HomeAdvisor notes that cedar shingle siding offers a natural look that blends well in wooded and waterfront landscapes. Wood clapboard siding is another popular option, though it tends to require more maintenance than cedar shingle siding. Homeowners who want wood siding should discuss their options with an experienced siding professional, as many factors, including the choice of wood, must be considered before making a final decision.

## Stone and stone-veneer siding

Many homeowners fall in love with the natural appeal of stone, but the price tag, which tends to be costly, may not be as awe-inspiring. HGTV notes that stone can be difficult to

add to an existing home, and doing so may drive the price up even further. Stone siding is durable, and there are many options, including solid stone and natural stone cladding, that make this an option capable of providing an array of looks. Stone-veneer siding is less expensive than natural stone and also comes in an array of styles. As is the case with wood, stone siding options are so extensive that homeowners are urged to discuss each one with a siding professional before making their decisions.

These are just a handful of the many siding options homeowners can choose from. Siding can give homes a completely new look, making choice of siding a significant decision worthy of careful consideration.



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# Home office must-haves

Remote work has been around for many years, though it certainly picked up steam in 2020. In an effort to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus COVID-19, in March 2020 government officials implemented stay-at-home measures that mandated many working professionals to begin working from home. That transition occurred seemingly overnight, forcing men and women to find somewhere in their homes to work.

As the dust settled and working professionals grew accustomed to working from home, many recognized the need to have an office in their homes. Various factors can make home offices more conducive to getting work done, and the following are some home office must-haves that can help people be more productive while working from home.

## Lighting

Lighting is important in a home office. It's easy to overlook natural light, especially for workers who previously worked in offices that did not have windows. But natural light can help save on energy costs and boost mood. In fact, natural light is a valued commodity for people used to working in office settings. A 2018 survey of more



than 1,600 workers conducted by the human resources advisory firm Future Workplace found that access to natural light and views of the outdoors were the most sought after attribute of a workplace environment. In addition, 47% of workers surveyed admitted they felt tired or very tired from the absence of natural light or a window at their office. When designing their home offices, homeowners should keep this in mind and choose areas of their homes

that get ample natural light during a typical workday.

Additional lighting also will be necessary. Recessed lighting can give an office a sleek look,

and lights that can dim can allow workers to adjust their lighting based on how much they need at any given point in the workday.

## Quiet

Professionals forced to work at home when social distancing measures were implemented may not have had much quiet, especially for those with young children whose schools were closed. But when designing a home office, homeowners have the chance to make their offices more conducive to concentration. Soundproofing walls may not be necessary, but look for areas of the home that don't get much foot traffic. Kitchens are very popular rooms in many homes, so try to locate your home office away from the kitchen. A spare bedroom upstairs may make for the most ideal home office setting if the home does not have a traditional den. Spare bedrooms come with doors, which can instantly

create a sense of quiet when closed. A converted garage also can make for a useful home office, but make sure the room already has cooling and heating and, ideally, windows.

## Electrical outlets

Recently built homes tend to be equipped with enough outlets to accommodate our increasingly connected lifestyles. But older homes may need some electrical updates before they can capably accommodate home offices. When updating your electrical, replace existing outlets and fixtures with energy-efficient LED fixtures, which save money and benefit the environment. Before updating the electrical, decide on how you want the office to be laid out so you can have outlets installed where your computer, devices and other items, like a printer and television, will be. This makes it easy to hide cords and give the office a clean, professional look.



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# Simple ways to improve a kitchen pantry

People have been spending more time at home in 2020 than in years past, and certain projects around the house have become a priority. One home improvement idea that serves the double benefit of creating organization and making cooking at home more efficient is to reimagine the kitchen pantry.

A pantry is a room or closet where food, beverages and linens or dishes are stored. Pantries can be highly useful spaces that provide ancillary storage in kitchens. Many modern homes are equipped with pantries, but older homes may require some modification to create more

useful pantries. Whether starting from scratch or modifying an existing pantry, these tips can help projects go more smoothly.

- **Maximize vertical storage.** Utilizing vertical areas can help increase storage capacity. Build in extra nooks by investing in undershelf storage baskets. These baskets can instantly create designated areas for different types of ingredients. Homeowners also can look for ways to use the inside of cabinet doors or add extra shelves on walls or in eaves.

- **Consider your needs.** Figure out which items you would like to store in the pantry and then shop

for corresponding storage systems. For example, storage solutions may feature wine bottle racks, baskets for potatoes and other produce, shelving for small appliances, and even pull out racks for baking pans or cutting boards.

- **Use clear storage.** Put ingredients in clear, airtight containers of similar dimensions so that you can easily find items you need. Transfer bulky items, like cereals and baking supplies, to storage containers for uniformity.

- **Store bulk items elsewhere.** Bulk shopping can be cost-efficient, but bulk items can quickly eat up real estate in the pantry. Designate another area

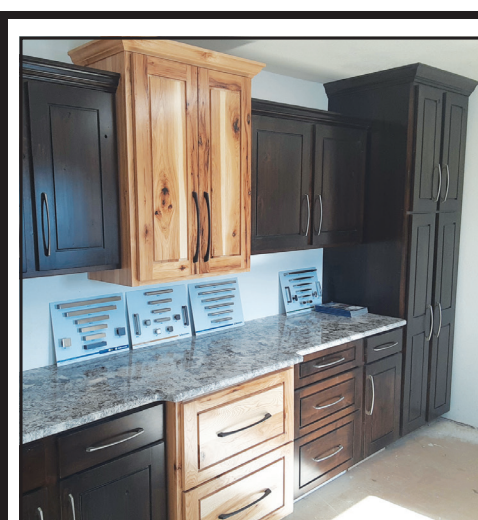
for non-perishable bulk products, like paper goods or canned items, such as in a garage or utility room.

- **Pull out drawers are convenient.** Pull-out drawers can reduce the need to seek and reach for items. These drawers conveniently roll out so items in the back can be accessed without disturbing foods in the front. Drawers can be custom built for any pantry space.

- **Make it accessible.** Think about who will be taking items from the pantry. Put children's snacks on the bottom pantry shelf where they can reach them, and then organize other shelves for adults in the home.



A pantry remodel can add valuable storage space and make one of the busiest rooms in the house operate more efficiently.



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# Pallet projects can be a handy hobby

In recent years, the trend of upcycling, or transforming unneeded or unwanted materials into new items or products, has become more popular. Unlike recycling, which is taking consumer materials like plastic, paper, metal, and glass and breaking them down so base materials can be remade into new, lower-quality consumer products, upcycling produces items of a higher quality than the original materials.

Wood pallet projects are an excellent example of upcycling. Such projects involve taking wood pallets, which tend to be used to stack, move and store stock, and turning them into amazing wood products. Often free for the taking, pallet wood has become a popular building material for do-it-yourselfers. This rustic wood already has an aged look and decorative appeal. Pallets are often made from leftover wood, and using them anew is an eco-friendly endeavor that can add flair to any project. The following are just a handful of pallet project ideas.

- **Christmas trees:** Start thinking ahead to the holiday season. Cut pallet planks into sizes that incrementally get larger and attach to form a triangular Christmas tree shape. Decorate with paint or other accents, and don't forget to place a star on top.

- **Pallet planter:** Make a planter box as big or as small as you like to grow flowers, vegetables or herbs. A narrow planter also can be hung on a wall to add flair to spaces indoors or outside.

- **Swing chair:** A pallet, a supportive back and some cushions can be used



**Do-it-yourselfers can skip purchasing wood boards and upcycle wood pallets instead.**

to make a swing that is fastened to the ceiling of a porch or even a tree.

- **Wine rack:** Turn pallet wood into a wine rack that also has a space to store wine glasses below it.

- **Outdoor table:** Top a disused table with pallet boards nailed or screwed to the top. Stain or clear coat them, and the result is a brand new table for gardening use or outdoor entertaining.

- **Platform bed:** Pallets can be sanded, painted and placed to form the base of a platform bed. Utilize more pallets to serve as a headboard attached to the wall or bed frame.

- **Bench:** Make a pallet bench that can

be crafted child- or adult-sized. Use it inside the house or outdoors on a patio.

- **Garbage container:** Instead of generic plastic garbage pails, make a pallet kitchen garbage container that has rustic appeal.

- **Backsplash:** Give a kitchen some rustic appeal with a pallet backsplash. Cut boards into desired lengths and stagger on the wall. Leave the wood raw or seal it for protection against moisture.

Pallet wood can be transformed into many different projects, helping do-it-yourselfers stay busy at minimal cost. Go online to search for plans for building an array of pallet projects.

## The value of mulched leaves

Homeowners who don't look forward to dusting off their rakes each fall might be happy to learn that mulching fallen leaves with a mower may be a healthier and less labor intensive way to confront a yard covered in leaves. For 20 years, turfgrass specialists at Michigan State University studied how lawns reacted to having ground up leaves left on the lawn and the results were overwhelmingly positive. Researchers found that tiny pieces of mulched leaves eventually sifted down through the turf and provided the lawn with essential nutrients. Mulched leaves also served to control future weed growth by covering up bare spots between turf plants. Such spots typically provided openings for weed seeds to germinate and ultimately infect lawns. In fact, researchers found that mulching leaves for just three years could produce a nearly 100% decrease in dandelion and crabgrass growth. Homeowners with mulching mowers that also have bags can even help their gardens by alternating using the mower with and without the bag on once leaves begin to fall. When mowing with the bag on, mulched leaves can then be used as mulch in landscape beds and vegetable gardens.

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# Types of home insulation and where to install them

When thinking about renovating their homes, homeowners may imagine changing wall colors, expanding room sizes or upgrading appliances and fixtures. However, unless people take inventory of the less glamorous components of the home, such as structure, plumbing, heating and cooling, and insulation, other improvements may be for naught.

A home insulation project certainly doesn't offer the wow factor of a kitchen remodel, but insulation serves a vital function in the house that helps keep people comfortable and reduces energy consumption. Insulation is typically placed in areas where air escapes, such as between the stud cavities inside the walls and in the attic, and serves to slow and

reduce heat transfer.

The U.S. Department of Energy says between 50% and 70% of the energy used in homes is for heating and cooling. By improving home insulation, homeowners can make their homes more comfortable, consistent and efficient. In fact, the ENERGY STAR program overseen by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says homeowners stand to save an average of 15% on heating and cooling costs by adding proper insulation. To do so, homeowners can take a crash course in home insulation and find the products that fit their needs.

## Blanket batts and rolls

Blanket batts and rolls typically are constructed with fiberglass, so proper safety gear, such as a

mask and gloves, is needed when handling them. Installing this type of insulation is relatively easy since the materials are designed to fit the standard width between studs, rafters and floor joists.

## Loose fill

Loose fill is usually made of fiberglass or cellulose (recycled paper fiber). It is blown or sprayed into place with pneumatic equipment, according to The Home Depot. Loose fill can be ideal for hard-to-reach areas in attics or inside wall cavities. It's good for adding insulation to irregularly shaped areas. Since it requires special equipment, this is a job best left to professionals.

## Sprayed foam

Sprayed foam is just as the name implies, a foam made from



Homeowners considering upgrading their insulation or amending existing insulation should do their homework on the type of insulation that will be most effective for their homes.

polyurethane, polyisocyanurate, cementitious, or other materials that are applied by a spray container. DIYers who need only small applications can use canned products. Large quantities are pressure-sprayed by professionals.

Foam board/rigid foam panels

Ideal for unfinished walls, such as basement or foundation walls, floors and ceilings, these are boards of polyurethane or polystyrene. Foam boards tend to reduce energy consumption more effectively than other types of insulation.

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# How to recognize when you can stop mowing

Each weekend in spring, summer and fall, millions of homeowners fire up their mowers and cut the grass in their yards. A few hours spent mowing the lawn can be a great time to get some sun and some exercise in the great outdoors.

As fall gradually transitions to winter, homeowners may wonder when to stop mowing their lawns. Each lawn is different, and when to stop mowing may depend on a host of factors, including local climate and the type of turf. In addition to climate and turf, homeowners can keep an eye on these conditions to determine when the time is right to put their mowers away for the winter.

• **Frost:** Warm-season grasses typically go dormant after a couple of significant frosts. Homeowners can jot down each frost during fall. Frosts are most noticeable in the early morning hours, so be sure to check lawn conditions each morning as the weather begins to grow cold. Frost may be noticeable without even going outside, but homeowners may need to go outside to check on chilly mornings or on days when the previous

night was especially cold. If you must go outside, stay off the grass to protect it. Two or three frosts might be enough to make warm-season grasses go dormant for the winter. Cool-season grasses may keep growing and require mowing even after a few frosts, so it's imperative that homeowners determine which type of grass is in their yards.

• **Soil temperature:** If it's hard to determine if frosts have occurred, homeowners can try checking the temperature of their soil to decide if they need to keep mowing. The lawn care experts at Pennington recommend homeowners continue mowing warm-season grasses so long as they keep growing. Lawns may not grow as quickly in fall as they do in spring or summer, and growth may not be as visible to the naked eye during this time of year as it is in other times. Homeowners can routinely

check soil temperature to determine if their grasses have stopped growing. Warm-season grasses tend to stop growing once the soil temperature is consistently at 55 F or below, while cool-season grasses tend to stop when temperatures are 45 F or lower.

Falling leaves have long been a barometer used by homeowners to determine if they need to keep mowing their lawns. That's not necessarily a reliable metric, as grass can still keep growing even if leaves have been falling for weeks. In addition, using a mulching mower when leaves begin falling is a great way to provide the lawn with nutrients it can use throughout the winter. Some trees shed their leaves more quickly than others, but it's a good rule of thumb that lawns will need to keep being mowed if trees are still retaining more than half their leaves.



A host of factors can help homeowners determine when it's safe to put their mowers away for the winter.

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# 5 tips to prepare for window replacement

Winter is coming, and for millions of people who reside in areas of the country that see the mercury drop considerably between December and March, that means prioritizing staying warm. Inefficient or aging housing materials may compromise your ability to do just that.

Drafts from doors, poorly protected attics and basements and aging windows may force heating systems to work extra hard to maintain interior temperatures.

Replacing old windows can make a home quieter by blocking out exterior noises. Consumer Reports also notes that new windows are often easier to clean and maintain than older varieties.

Many homeowners are interested in replacing their windows, but may not know where to start. These guidelines can help the process along.

**1. Get several estimates.** Ask for recommendations from neighbors or other people in your area on which companies they used to install their replacement windows. When you interview the prospects, ask several questions about how they go about installing the windows. Questions can include:

- How long will the project take?
- Will I need to remain home during the process?
- Do you discard old debris?
- What is the protocol for installation during inclement weather?

**2. Research permits.** Most home renovation projects need to be approved by the local municipality. Go to the permit office and find

out the requirements. Some window contractors will include securing permits in the cost of the project. After the project is completed, an inspector will come by and ensure the work was done according to code.

**3. Change up the appearance.** Look at the type of hardware you have around the home and other fixtures. Choose windows that have locks or latches that can match those features for continuity of style. Think about choosing a different style or frame color of the window, or a different type of window to improve efficiency and function.

**4. Research top window manufacturers.** It's tempting to purchase windows based on price alone, but replacement windows are often a decision that only has to be made once or twice for the life of the home. Invest in durable windows that will have staying power. Consumer Reports offers unbiased reviews on various window brands and can help homeowners make sound decisions.

**5. Prepare for installation.** Clear pathways, remove window treatments and disconnect window alarm systems. Plan for one to two days of installation, advises Andersen Windows and Doors. Keep pets and children away from work areas.



Replacement windows can be a smart investment. New windows can improve the look of a home, reduce heating costs and can keep interior spaces comfortable.

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# 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% 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% 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.

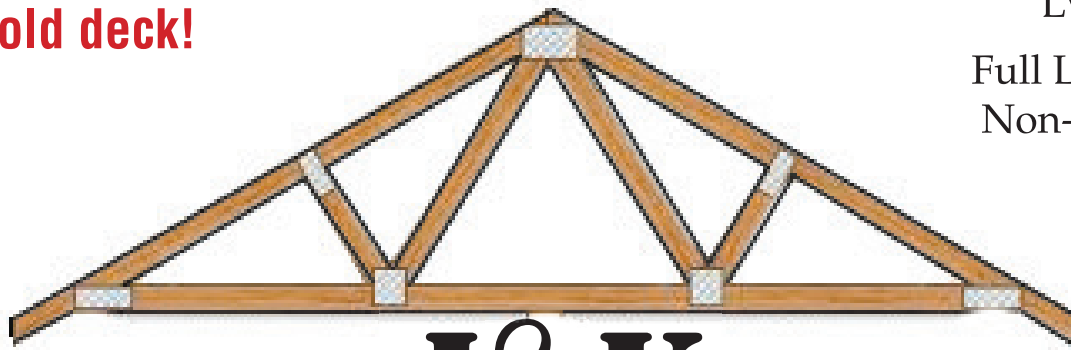
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# Best methods to repair damaged driveways

Asphalt and concrete driveways are common throughout suburban neighborhoods. They are as much a part of a home as lawns, decks and other exterior elements. Regardless of how they're utilized, driveways need to be cared for and maintained to retain their appearance and function.

Even the most durable driveways can suffer from cracks and pits over time. As cracks form, they pave the way for more deterioration if they are not addressed. Water infiltration can break down the integrity of the driveway during freeze and thaw periods, and any little hole or crack can promote weed growth.



Driveway repair can be a do-it-yourself project, but pay attention to the details to ensure the job is done right.

## Asphalt

The home improvement resource The Family Handyman says it is key to first repair cracks and

pits in an asphalt driveway before planning to topcoat it, which is generally done every year or so to maintain its appearance and durability. A variety of topcoat products are available at various price points. Experts recommend investing

in a quality product that will not shrink and crack. A melt-in material that is similar to products used by highway crews can be purchased for around \$100. This product also will require use of a propane torch. Caulk-style crack repair products may not require as many tools, and are much easier to apply. They may not last as long, however. Homeowners must weigh the pros and cons to each before beginning.

The experts at Popular Mechanics say that there also are other asphalt patch mixes available at home supply retailers. Serious holes, rather than cracks, can be addressed with a coarse-aggregate

filler commonly referred to as cold patch.

After cracks and holes are filled, use a sealer to lock everything in place and create a smooth topcoat appearance. Speak with a store employee if you are unsure which product is needed for your application.

## Concrete

The process is similar with concrete driveways, yet the products differ. Small driveway cracks can be repaired by scrubbing out the crack to remove debris and then filling using a mortar repair compound, suggests the repair advice site Home Guides. Larger cracks and potholes should be cleaned. Once

that's done, apply a painted-in bonder to the crack or hole, followed by a dry concrete patching product mixed with water. The material can be worked into the damaged area with a trowel, and then leveled using a wood board. Afterward, a liquid concrete sealer can be applied to help prevent future cracks and holes.

Homeowners who are hesitant to fix their driveways can contact masons or asphalt specialists to perform the job. Keeping up on driveway repair can prolong the life of the surface and help delay a complete driveway replacement for several years.

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# 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 Hunter 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



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

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 eas-

ier 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.



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# 7 things to consider when buying a shed

Backyard sheds can be useful assets. Sheds can create storage space in the garage, basement or other areas of the house that have become gathering spots for gear typically used outdoors. Sheds are ideal for housing mowers, tools and even pool-care equipment. But they can be put to other uses as well, such as being key spots to engage in hobbies or even as a child's clubhouse.

Various factors should be considered before building or buying a shed. A storage shed can be a significant investment. Once placed, sheds may remain in their dedicated spots for years to come. That means careful thought should go into the planning process.

**1. Check your local building codes first.** Before you accumulate building materials or order a shed, be sure to know the ins and outs of

shed codes. The codes may impact the shed's placement, construction, the materials used, size, and numerous other factors. It's much easier to amend plans beforehand than to face the hassle and expense after



Sheds can be an asset and improve storage capability in the backyard.

learning you did things incorrectly.

**2. Choose placement wisely.**

Spend several days assessing the yard and thinking about the uses for the shed. If you plan to store pool floats and chemicals inside of

the shed, it should be located close enough to the pool to be convenient. Look at the lay of the land. If there is a soggy patch of land that can turn swampy under the shed's foundation, that is a poor location choice. If you need access to electricity, placing it far away from the house could necessitate running expensive wiring.

**3. Consider the design.** Just because a shed is for storage doesn't mean aesthetics should be overlooked. Choose a shed style that complements your home. You may also want to match certain architectural features, like arched doorways or dormers. Design also may relate to practicality. For instance, storing a riding mower inside may necessitate dual doors that open widely.

**4. Invest in quality materials.** Spending a little more and using

quality materials can ensure it lasts long enough to be cost-effective. The right materials will be resistant to splitting, cracking, decay, and insect damage.

**5. Prepare the site well.** A proper foundation for the shed is almost as important as the shed itself. You cannot just drop the shed on the lawn and leave it, as the shed can sink or structural issues may arise if it is placed on a weak base.

**6. Blend into the environment.** Surround the shed with shrubs or plants so that it blends into the yard and complements the space.

**7. Deck out the interior.** Use every storage tool at your disposal to maximize floor, wall and even rafter space for storage. Plan where items will be kept and customize the storage options around those locations.

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# How to remove mildew from your home's exterior

Homeowners want their residences to look inviting inside and out. Part of keeping an attractive property involves addressing issues that can compromise not only the appearance of a home, but even its integrity. People who live in regions with high humid-

ity may find their homes are vulnerable to exterior mildew growth. Mildew is a kind of mold. Molds include all species of microscopic fungi that grow in the form of hyphae, which are multicellular filaments, according to the Environmental Protection Agen-

cy. Mold thrives on any organic matter and surfaces with moisture management problems. Mildew, in particular, lives on shower walls, windowsills and other places where moisture levels are high. Mildew also can grow on home siding as well as fences and other

exterior structures. While typically gray or white, mildew can be various colors.

Experts recommend various cleansers to help combat the issue of mildew on a home. One of the first products that homeowners tend to reach for is sodium hypochlorite, which is a standard bleach used in laundry and pool sanitation. While sodium hypochlorite seems to make mildew vanish, those at This Old House say that chlorine evaporates too quickly to get to mildew's roots on porous surfaces, such as wood or vinyl siding. Bleach also can stain clothing and damage foliage around the house. Hydrogen peroxide, or oxygen bleach, is less volatile, will

not affect foliage and can clean mildew, algae and dirt on and below the surface.

Trisodium phosphate is another effective cleanser. Commonly known as TSP, it often succeeds where other solutions fail in regard to stubborn stains and mildew. TSP also works well on various exterior surfaces. TSP needs to be used with extreme caution. When using TSP, wear long sleeves, gloves, goggles, and a respiratory mask, says Today's Homeowner. The product also requires adequate ventilation. There also are some environmental concerns, as TSP can damage foliage. In addition, if the product ends up in lakes and streams, it can trigger an overgrowth of

algae that results in the depletion of oxygen levels in the water. Eco-conscious homeowners may want to try oxy cleansers before TSP.

Mildew shies away from bright sunlight, so it tends to grow on the north side of homes. Removing trees or other foliage that can further block sunlight to areas of the house can help eradicate mildew growth and stop it before it starts. Another tactic is to clean out gutters regularly and thoroughly to reduce moisture and to prevent decomposing debris from running over the edge of the gutters. This runoff can drip down the home's siding and spread the mildew to other areas.





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