

# FALL

# HOME IMPROVEMENT

A Norwich and Sidney Pennysavers Publication • Issue #1 • September 12, 2023

## Issue One

- 12 ways to maximize vertical space
- Design ideas to give your home a farmhouse feel
- Tips before deciding to do a DIY demolitions





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# Design ideas to give your home a farmhouse feel

Farmhouse style homes are having a moment. A 2020 survey from Homes.com asked more than 5,000 adults across the United States about their favorite house style from a list that included bohemian craftsman, mid-century modern ranch, French chateau, and Tudor, among others. Modern farmhouse was the runaway winner, as participants in 42 of the 50 states indicated this simple, cozy style was their favorite.

Home renovation projects can help homeowners put their own unique stamp on their homes, and such projects can be both aesthetic and functional in nature. The following are some farmhouse design elements homeowners can consider as they look to transform their home interiors with this popular style in mind.

- **Exposed beams:** Exposed beams instantly evoke images of a farmhouse. The home improvement experts at BobVila.com note that this rustic renovation project can utilize real wood or faux beams that look like the real thing. Decorative beams that have nothing to do with a home's structural integrity can be installed by skilled do-it-yourselfers. However, even faux beams are heavy, and BobVila.com recommends homeowners have an engineer assess their existing structure prior to installation.
- **Distressed wood finishes:** Distressing is designed to make something look less than perfect. Distressed wood finishes can be found throughout many farmhouse style homes. Furniture and picture frames can provide the distressed look farmhouse fans are looking for. This is a relatively inexpensive project that many homeowners can tackle on their own after watching some online tutorials that recommend the right tools and

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techniques to get the job done right.

- Kitchen sink: Many components combine to create a truly classic farmhouse kitchen. But perhaps no component is more essential than the classic farmhouse sink. The renovation experts at HGTV note that a classic farmhouse sink features a deep, wide basin. Farmhouse sinks are large enough to handle all the dishes that come after a big family meal. Old-fashioned porcelain sinks are worth consideration by homeowners who want their kitchen sinks to evoke a traditional farmhouse feel.
- Countertops: HGTV recommends butcher block countertops for homeowners who favor European farmhouse style. Homeowners overhauling their kitchens to create a farmhouse feel should consider installing a large island with a walnut butcher block countertop for an authentic farmhouse feel.

Farmhouse style homes are wildly popular. Some simple renovations can help homeowners with a fondness for farmhouse style bring this classic look into their homes. FH218159

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# What causes curled shingles?

No homeowner wants to look at the exterior of his or her home and see roof damage. Such damage may lead homeowners to think they need a new roof, a potentially costly expense that can quickly throw household budgets into a

state of disarray.

**Homeowners with attics in their home may see curled shingles on their roofs because moisture is building up in their poorly ventilated attics.**

According to the HomeAdvisor, the average homeowner spends a little more than \$7,600 installing a new roof. Various factors, including the size of a home and the type of roof homeowners prefer, will affect the cost of a roof replacement. In addition, homeowners who see roof damage can rest assured that not all roof problems

will necessarily require a replacement roof to be installed.

Curled shingles are a problem many homeowners have encountered. This particular problem is not always indicative that a roof is on its way out. In fact, the home improvement resource This Old House notes that, as asphalt shingles age, their corners often begin to curl downward or upward.

Homeowners who notice this early enough can glue down the curled section of each shingle that's beginning to curl.

Some shingles may be curling because they're defective. Fortified Roofing, a

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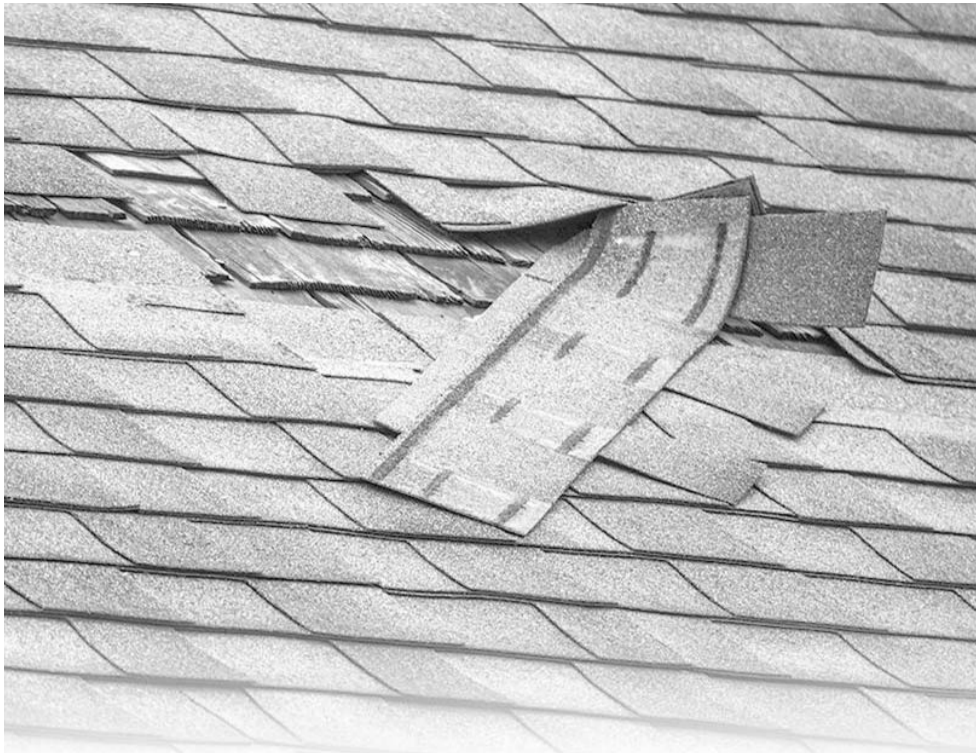
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New Jersey-based roofing company that specializes in the repairing and replacing of various roofing configurations, advises homeowners to contact a local roofing professional to diagnose the cause of the curling. Doing so quickly can prevent curled shingles from contributing to more widespread damage.

Moisture and poor ventilation may be contributing to curled shingles as well. Homeowners with attics in their home may see curled shingles on their roofs because moisture is building up in their poorly ventilated attics. In addition to causing damage such as curled shingles, a poorly ventilated attic allows moisture to build up, potentially contributing to mold growth. Mold presents a host of additional problems, including some that can adversely affect the health of a home's inhabitants.

Improper roof installation also may be the culprit behind curled shingles. When a roof is not installed correctly, shingles may not be aligned or nailed down in the right way. This might be what's causing shingles to curl on recently installed roofs.

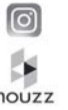
Curled shingles are unsightly and can pose a significant threat to a home if not addressed promptly. Homeowners can protect themselves and their roofs by working with skilled roofing professionals, who can diagnose issues like curled shingles and offer the right solutions. FH198134

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# Tips before deciding to do a DIY demolition

Home improvement projects can range from relatively inexpensive undertakings to complex endeavors that cost homeowners thousands of dollars. In an effort to make expensive projects more affordable, homeowners may look for ways to pitch in, and do-it-yourself demolition is a common way to cut costs.

Due to geographical fluctuations in price as well as the scale of a project, it's hard to pinpoint just how much homeowners can save by doing demolition work themselves. HomeAdvisor estimates that the average small interior demolition project costs just over \$3,000, though more significant demolition projects can cost considerably more than that. Given the cost, it's no surprise that so many homeowners volunteer to do demolition on their own. Though it's possible to do so safely, homeowners can take steps to determine if it's in their best interest to take on a DIY demolition or leave it to the professionals.

- **Conduct a cost analysis.** Demolition projects seem simple, but they often require the use of equipment most homeowners don't have on hand. Rentals can be considered in such instances, but the cost of renting equipment can reduce the amount of money homeowners are saving by going it alone. For example, homeowners may be able to pull up vinyl or tile flooring on their own, but not all floors are installed the same. Some floors may have been glued more effectively than others, making it hard and/or time-consuming to pull them up by hand. A walk-behind floor scraper can make it easier to remove such floors, but that equipment must be rented. A cost analysis comparing the contractors' demolition cost estimate and the cost of DIY, complete with equipment rental projections, can give a more accurate picture of how much money homeowners will save by going it alone. If the savings

of DIY are negligible, homeowners should probably let the contractor handle the demo.

- **Speak with your contractor.** Prior to saying they'll do the demo work on their own, homeowners should speak with their contractors to get an accurate idea of what the project will entail. Demolition projects may seem simple enough, but contractors can illustrate the correct way to do things so as to minimize potentially costly damage. Some contractors may offer to help homeowners start the demo project and then leave them to their own devices once they get a knack for what to do. Once homeowners see what it will take, they can then decide if DIY is best for them.

- **Enlist help.** No DIY demo should ever be done alone. The risk for accident and injury is simply too great for homeowners to go it alone. Homeowners who can't enlist some volunteers to pitch in should leave the job to the professionals.

DIY demolition can save homeowners a lot of money. But such projects are not necessarily as simple as they seem. Homeowners should take steps to see exactly what they're getting into before they volunteer to take on demo duty. FH218175

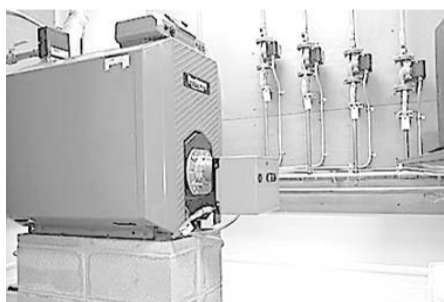


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# Lighting is a key component of curb appeal

Curb appeal can affect prospective buyers' perception of a home. When addressing curb appeal, homeowners may be inclined to focus on features that are easily seen from the street during the day. But what can a homeowner do to improve on his or her home's nighttime aesthetic?

Outdoor lighting is one aspect of curb appeal that is often overlooked, advises the home improvement experts at The Spruce. Homeowners may fail to recognize the importance of how proper illumination can provide their homes with a warm glow and make it look beautiful after the sun has set. For example, think of how cozy and inviting

*Think of how cozy and inviting neighborhoods appear during the holiday season when homes are strung with twinkling lights.*

neighborhoods appear during the holiday season when homes are strung with twinkling lights. Homeowners can replicate that look all year long with lighting elements. Lighting for evening hours also helps maintain a safe environment for people who are visiting the property. Illuminating walkways and doorways

provides a clearly visible and safe path to and from the home.

The following are a few ways to improve outdoor lighting.

- Focus on architectural features. Outdoor lighting can focus on the external features of the home's architectural style. Use light to draw attention to interesting gables, dramatic roof lines, dormers, or curved entryways.



- Play up landscaping. Stylish lighting can highlight trees, shrubs, pathways, gardens, and all of the elements of softscapes and hardscapes on a property. The lighting experts at Vernon Daniel Associates say that soft lighting can make homes feel warm and cozy. Uplighting trees or other elements can add a dramatic effect.
- Light up all doors. Make sure that doors, both entry and garage, are properly lit for ease of entry and egress from the home. Safety.com, a home and personal security resource, says a home burglary occurs every 15 seconds in the United States. Installing motion-activated lights or lights on timers can deter break-ins. Consider using home automation to control porch lights and other outdoor lights remotely, if necessary.
- Create entertaining areas. Outdoor lighting can be used to extend the hours residents can spend outside. This is great for entertaining and can be an excellent selling point. Homeowners are urged not to overlook outdoor lighting as a vital part of their plan to improve curb appeal. TF18C540

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# Make the Most of small Bathrooms....

Renovating bathrooms is commonly at the top of home improvement to-do lists. Though some rooms around the house may remain timeless, bathrooms, like kitchens, show their age (and era) much more easily, which could be why homeowners are always on the lookout for new ideas. Although many people may dream about creating a spa-type oasis in their homes, not everyone is lucky enough to have a large bathroom, much less a large budget for a full-scale renovation. Small bathrooms are common, particularly in older homes, but they needn't force homeowners to compromise on style when renovating.

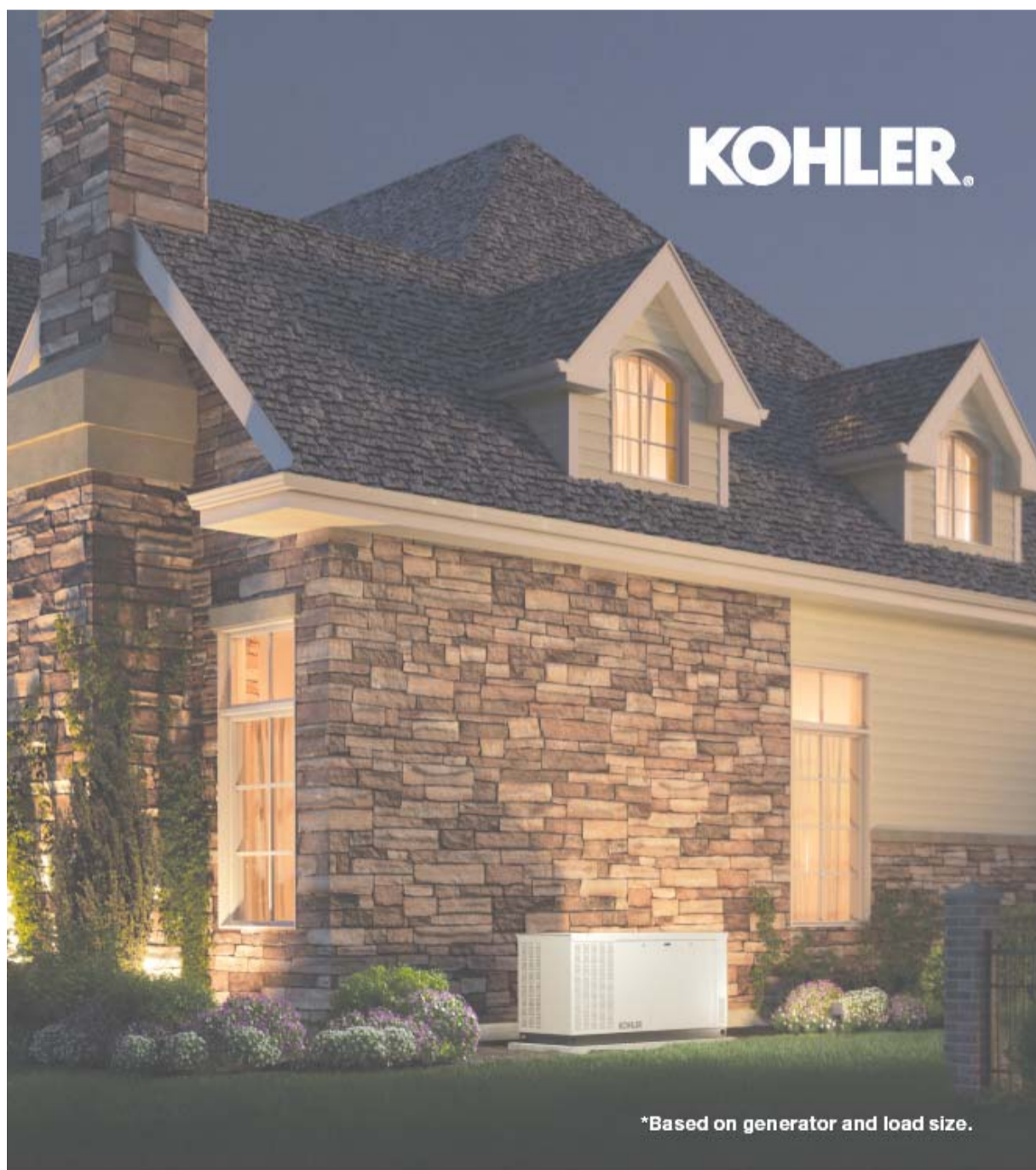
Small bathrooms may be a half-bath on a main home level or even a full bath, depending on the home. By thinking creatively, homeowners can maximize their spaces and redo bathrooms in ways that bring out their best assets.

- When space is at a premium, it's best to look for fixtures and items that fit

### A Frameless Shower Can Take Up Less Space In A Small Bathroom.

with the scale of the bathroom. Although you may want a large vanity and cabinet in which to hide all of your toiletries, this simply may not be practical -- taking up most of the bathroom real estate. Instead, look for elegant pedestal sinks that have a much smaller profile. They'll also help you control the clutter in the bathroom because there won't be anywhere to hide it.

- Use optical illusions to make the bathroom appear more roomy. For example, lay tile diagonally to create the impression of space. A large mirror will reflect the room back and make it appear much larger than it really is.
- Select lighter hues in paint colors and accessories. Dark paints and fixtures could make the room feel cramped. Dark colors are generally used to make spaces feel more cozy. In a small bathroom, it may make the space feel claustrophobic. Instead, think light and bright and the room will instantly feel more airy.



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- Minimize wall hangings and keep fixtures smaller. Filling the walls with knickknacks may contribute to clutter and make the space appear closed in. Use decorative items sparingly.
- If possible, store towels in a closet outside of the bathroom. This way you won't have to devote space inside the bathroom to a closet, leaving more room for other things.
- While some people like the thought of a separate bath and shower, in smaller bathrooms this may not be possible. Instead, look for a combined shower and bath, or select a walk-in shower with a much smaller profile.
- Windows are often welcome in bathrooms because of the ventilation they provide, but they could be a hindrance in smaller bathrooms because they take up prime wall space. Cover a window in a shower stall to free up space. Just be sure to install a venting fan to reduce moisture in the bathroom.
- Maximize wall space if you need storage. Find cabinets that will fit beneath windows or be able to fit in thin areas between sinks and toilets. Over the toilet is prime area for cabinetry.
- Consider a frameless shower. This is a partitioned area of the bathroom that's set aside for the shower and is typically only cordoned off by a thin wall or piece of glass. Or a shower with no walls at all is the ultimate in space-saving. The entire bathroom floor is decked out in tile, and a portion is sloped toward a shower drain.
- Think about installing a skylight if you prefer natural light, but there is no room for a traditional window. Thinking creatively can help turn a cramped bathroom into a space-saving and well-designed room homeowners desire.



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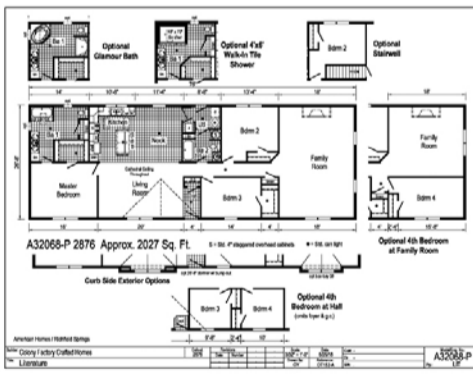
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**candjlawncaresny@gmail.com**

# 12 ways to maximize vertical space

Who hasn't, at one point in their lives, lamented a lack of space and organization at home? A lifetime's worth of items have to be kept somewhere, and without the right organizational strategy, clutter can quickly take over.

The home improvement site Home Therapy says that, when square footage is limited, tapping vertical walls is the fastest way to maximize and multiply the space available. Hooks, rods, shelving, built-ins ... the sky is the limit when it comes to finding additional storage and adding a bit of personality to tight quarters. Even homes that may have adequate space can benefit from vertical solutions.

Here are some ideas to put vertical and other less-utilized areas to work for you.

1. Hang wire or plastic file organizers on the inside of kitchen cabinets to easily store cookie sheets, trays and cutting boards.
2. Save on counter or cabinet space with hanging spice racks. These can be hung directly on walls or on the inside of cabinet doors.
3. Stack all the stuff you can, including washers and dryers, beds (with storage drawers underneath) and even stacking nesting tables.
4. Choose furniture that is tall rather than wide. This can mean swapping out a dresser in a bedroom for an armoire or vertical chest of drawers.
5. Canvas bags hung on a towel bar on a wall can keep dirty clothes wrangled until it's time to wash them. This also eliminates clothes hampers on the floor.

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6. Add a second rod or shelving to the inside of closets to create more space for clothing and other items.
  7. Take kitchen cabinets all the way to the ceiling. Store lesser used items on the uppermost shelves and the items you use each on the most accessible shelves.
  8. Install a shelf over the entryway to a room to utilize this seldom-used space. Shelves also can be custom cut and placed in oddly shaped areas, such as in attic rooms under the eaves or on slanted walls.
  9. Dowels or curtain rods and some fabric can be used to fabricate slings to hold books or magazines.
  10. Invest in some magnetic boards that can hold keys or notes by the front door or store knives on a kitchen wall.
  11. Install two towel bars parallel to one another on the wall of a bathroom. These can hold extra toilet tissue or rolled hand towels.
  12. Use rope plant hangers to store potatoes or onions near prep areas. The same plant hangers can wrangle stuffed animals and small toys in kids' rooms.
- Utilizing vertical areas in a home is a great way to increase storage capacity and keep rooms more organized. TF191646

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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 issue in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, many people have found themselves looking for ways to exercise at home.

**A home gym space will likely not be as expansive as the space inside a traditional fitness center.**

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. TF207075

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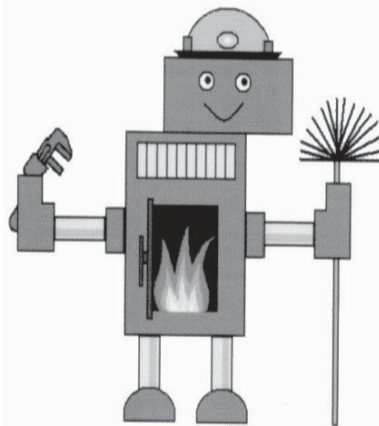
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# Budget-friendly dining room renovation ideas

If the kitchen is the heart of the home, then the dining room may be akin to one of its arteries. The mood created in the kitchen spreads to the dining space where family and friends gather to eat and enjoy one another's company.

Dining rooms can get lost in the home renovation shuffle, as many homeowners tend to focus on renovating kitchens and bathrooms instead. Homeowners do not have to invest a lot of money in renovations to give their dining spaces awe-inspiring makeovers.

Here's how to do so on a budget.

- Lighten and brighten. Dining rooms were once very formal spaces. Dark woods, large pieces of furniture, over-the-top chandeliers, and other details could be found in many homes. But now that houses are being built with open floor plans, dining rooms can blend with other spaces, which have moved to lighter colored walls, flooring and furniture. A fresh coat of vibrant paint can work

**Improve lighting. Make the chandelier the statement piece of the space. Go for a bold color or an innovative design.**

wonders and it doesn't cost much. If you can't remove a floor, cover it with a brightly colored area rug.

- Switch things up with slipcovers. Slipcovers can be changed each season to dramatically alter the look of a dining room for little investment. Slip covers also protect chairs and can be easily laundered after spills.

- Add floating shelving. Floating shelves provide much-needed storage or display space without the need to invest in another piece of furniture.

Depending on the shelving, they can work in modern design schemes or even farmhouse dining spaces.

- Clear out the clutter. It might be time to say "so long" to that large curio cabinet and the knickknacks within it. Curio and china cabinets used to be de rigueur, but plenty of people now prefer more open and airy dining rooms.



For those who want to keep the cabinet, try decluttering inside to only include the very best display pieces and see if the cabinet can be refinished with paint or a lightly colored stain.

- Improve lighting. Make the chandelier the statement piece of the space. Go for a bold color or an innovative design. Then add accessories throughout the space that coordinate with the chandelier.
- Add bench seating. Those who need additional seating may not have to get entirely new furniture. Swap out some chairs for benches, which can fit a couple more guests than chairs.
- Create depth with color. HGTV says that using various shades of the same color in a space can add depth. Coordinate drapes, walls, seat fabrics, and accessories for a cohesive design.

Renovating a dining room doesn't require a large investment of time and money. A few simple steps can give dining spaces a whole new feel without busting homeowners' budgets. DE21B459

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# How to protect wood floors from inclement weather

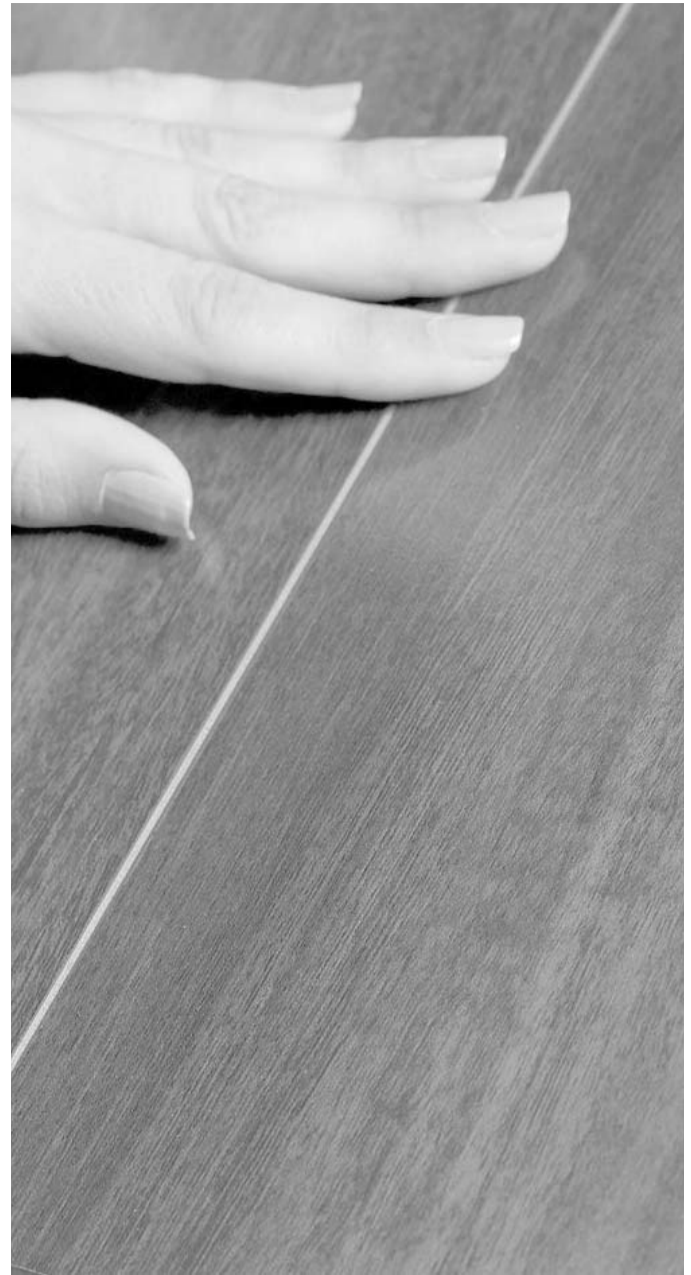
Wood floors are a worthwhile investment that can improve the beauty and function of just about any room in a home. Even though wood floors are durable, and new protective treatments help seal out many of the things that may have damaged floors in the past, homeowners still need to prioritize protecting their hardwood floors.

Certain seasons of the year can be more harsh on wood floors than others. For example, seasons characterized by moisture and precipitation, particularly the early spring, winter and fall, can be hard on wood floors. The experts at ServiceMaster Clean say that cold, snowy days can damage wood floors, and Lumber Liquidators agrees that winter weather can be harsh on flooring. Homeowners need not give up on hardwood if they live in an area that sees all four seasons. They just need to take a few steps to keep floors looking beautiful.

- Clean up the salt. Salt that keeps sidewalks and streets clear of snow and ice inadvertently gets tracked inside a home. Hard chunks of salt can scratch wood floors, and, if left to sit, that salt can eventually cause white marks and other stains. Routinely vacuuming and sweeping up salt is necessary to protect wood floors.
- Invest in shoe storage. Wet or snowy boots can create puddles around the house. Have a special mat or tray by the front door where wet shoes can be kept. A nice bench in the entryway makes it easy for residents and guests to remove their shoes until it's time to go back outside.
- Use water-wicking mats. Homeowners will probably need a few extra mats around to tame errant drips and wipe shoes. Any entrance that might be used by people or pets should be protected. Try to avoid petroleum-based, rubber-

backed mats, as they could discolor the wood floor.

- Control humidity indoors. Cold, dry air in a home can be problematic because the moisture in the wood can eventually evaporate into the air. The heat will suck that moisture from the flooring, causing it to shrink, creak and splinter and become more brittle. Think about investing in an in-line humidifier for the home's HVAC system that can keep a moderate amount of humidity in the home. Hardwood floorboards are installed to accommodate minor temperature and humidity fluctuations. This is typically a range of between 60 and 80 degrees F with a relative humidity range of 35 to 55 percent, advises ServiceMaster.



- Use the right cleaning products. Avoid excessive water to clean wood floors, and select soaps that are specially designed for wood flooring. Consult with the flooring manufacturer for a list of detergents that are safe to use. With proper care, hardwood flooring can survive rain, snow and cold weather. FH198119



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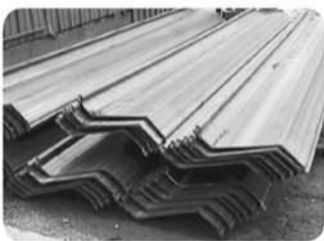
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# Winterize To Safeguard Your Home From Harsh Weather

Autumn is a beautiful time of year marked by welcoming cooler temperatures and the natural beauty of leaves changing colors. Autumn also has a tendency to fly by, as if the powerful weather of winter simply cannot wait to make its presence felt.

With such a seemingly short time between the end of summer and the dawn of winter, homeowners know they don't have too many weekends in between to prepare their homes for the potentially harsh months ahead. But such preparation, often referred to as "winterizing," can make a home more comfortable when the mercury dips below freezing, while saving homeowners substantial amounts of money along the way.

- **Clean the gutters.** Leaves falling in fall can be a beautiful sight to behold, but many of those leaves are likely finding their way into your gutters, where they can lodge and cause a host of problems down the road. If the leaves and additional debris, such as twigs and dirt, that pile up in your gutters are not cleared out before the first winter storm, the results can be costly and even catastrophic. Winter rain and snowfall needs a place to go upon hitting your roof, and gutters facilitate the travel of such precipitation from your roof into street-level drainage systems. If gutters are backed up with leaves and other debris, then ice dams may form, forcing water to seep in through the roof. That damage can be costly and can even cause the roof to collapse inward in areas with heavy snowfall. Clean gutters throughout the fall, especially if your property has many trees, and be sure to check gutters one last time before the arrival of winter.

- **Tend to your attic.** Homeowners who have attics in their homes might want to add some extra insulation up there, especially those who recall feeling cold inside their homes last winter, which is often a telltale sign of improper insulation in a home. A good rule of thumb when determining if your attic needs more insulation is to look for the ceiling joists. If you can see the joists, then you need more insulation.

- **Address leaky windows and doors.** Sometimes attic insulation is not the culprit when it comes to a cold home. Oftentimes, leaky windows and doors are the real bad guys in a drafty home. Fall is a great time to inspect for leaky windows and doors, as the wind outside can serve as your partner. When the wind outside is blowing, take a tour of your home's windows and doorways, standing next to them to determine if there any holes or leaks that are letting outdoor air inside. If you notice any leaks beneath exterior doors, install some door sweeps to keep outdoor air where it belongs. Leaks around windows can be snuffed out with caulk or weather stripping.

- **Test the furnace.** Homeowners typically do not devote much thought to their furnaces in spring, summer and fall. But with winter on the horizon, fall is the time to test the furnace to make sure it's ready for the months ahead. Expect a somewhat foul yet brief odor to appear when starting the furnace. That odor should dissipate shortly, but if it does not go away, then your furnace is likely in need of repair. But even if the smell does not stick around, you might want to have the furnace cleaned by a professional anyway. Such cleanings ensure the furnace works efficiently throughout the winter.

- **Clean the garage.** You might not mind parking in the driveway during the warmer months of the

year, but why subject your vehicles to harsh winter weather if you don't have to? Clean the garage in the fall so you have an indoor parking spot throughout the winter season. Protecting your car from the elements can add years to its life and also saves you the trouble of digging your car out of the snow.

Fall is a time of year for homeowners to spend a weekend or two preparing their homes for the often harsh weather that awaits when winter arrives. FH149472



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