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NEIGHBORHOOD'S HOME IMPROVEMENT STORE OFFERS HOMEOWNERS MANY OPTIONS

CHRIS RODEN
REPORTER@LACLEDERECORD.COM

When it comes to Neighborhood's Home Improvement Store, two pieces of information are hidden in plain sight.

The first is in the business's title and is the owner's last name.

"My last name is Hood, and I'm everybody's neighbor on this planet we've got to share," Stan Hood said.

The second is how to get to the store at 19850 Houston Road, which sometimes baffles first-time visitors.

Turning left just north of the propane business off north Missouri 5 and left again at Neighbor's street sign will take potential customers to the "secret entrance" to the store.

Hood started his store in 1995, which was in downtown Lebanon for five years until the business outgrew that building, and Hood built his store north of town 24 years ago.

"It just got pretty darn big. We have all kinds of cabinets, all kinds of countertops, custom showers," Hood said.

He specializes in kitchens, bathrooms and flooring supplies for new construction or remodel.

"We have all kinds of all wood cabinets, countertops and custom onyx showers. We do a lot of quartz and granite countertops in house. We cut them right here, most of the time in just a few days," he said.

He said while he has a lot of flooring options, Hood thinks he has the biggest selection of bathroom vanities and tops in the world, as far as he knows.

And he often has ideas about designing kitchens and other rooms that he enjoys sharing.



His daughter, Callista, works with him full-time.

"Callista knows it all. She is very personable and knowledgeable. People love her. She is awesome," he said.

Hood grew up in St. Louis, and his parents had a store at Eldon and Camdenton in the pre-Lowe's days, which his brother took over while Hood started his own store in Lebanon.

He has a theory about his success in the business.

"My number one thing is I like helping people, and it's very rewarding when you give someone a nice new kitchen that they're going to have for the next 30 years or so. That's the heart of a house," Hood said.

He said he beats the prices of the big box stores and recently sent two sets of cabinets to Florida and Iowa.

"We have people come as far as from Albuquerque, Sioux Falls, Kansas, Arkansas. They come from hundreds of miles to shop here. It's unbelievable," Hood said.

He is a natural born salesman, ready to sell



LOR Photos/Chris Roden

Top, Stan Hood and his daughter Callista stand near the kitchen countertop samples at Neighborhood's Home Improvement Store. Hood said he has customers who come from other states to take advantage of his 30,000 square feet of countertops, cabinets, flooring and more. Above, Stan Hood said his store has more bathroom vanity options at Neighborhood's Home Improvement Store than anywhere else he has been.

to anyone anywhere.

"I had one customer tell me the other day that I'm a walking infomercial. I sell

wherever I'm at. Eating out or wherever I'm at. If I can try to help somebody, I do," Hood said.

Those interested can find out more about the business at <https://www.neighborhoods-inc.com> or

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SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN PRESSURE WASHING

Water is essential to cleaning, but it can be an even more powerful asset when there is great force behind it. This is the concept behind pressure washers, which are tools that spray water at high pressure in order to clean an assortment of surfaces.

Pressure washers are typically used to clean siding, farm equipment, industrial machinery, concrete patios, and much more. The power behind pressure washers can cause injury. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says pressure washers can cause a host of injuries, including:

- The strong spray can cause serious wounds. High-pressured water can cut through flesh.
- The fast, strong spray can strike objects and toss them powerfully into others who are close by.
- Electric shock may occur if the pressure washer is not used properly.
- The force from the washer can knock a person off balance, whether operating the

tool on the ground or while on a ladder.

In most cases, injuries due to pressure washer usage are entirely preventable. Those who plan to use pressure washers should always do so with safety in mind. Here are some precautions to take.

- Identify potential hazards. Identify potential hazards with each different surface before beginning the job. Weather, personal fatigue, slippery surfaces and nearby electrical hazards can increase injury risk.

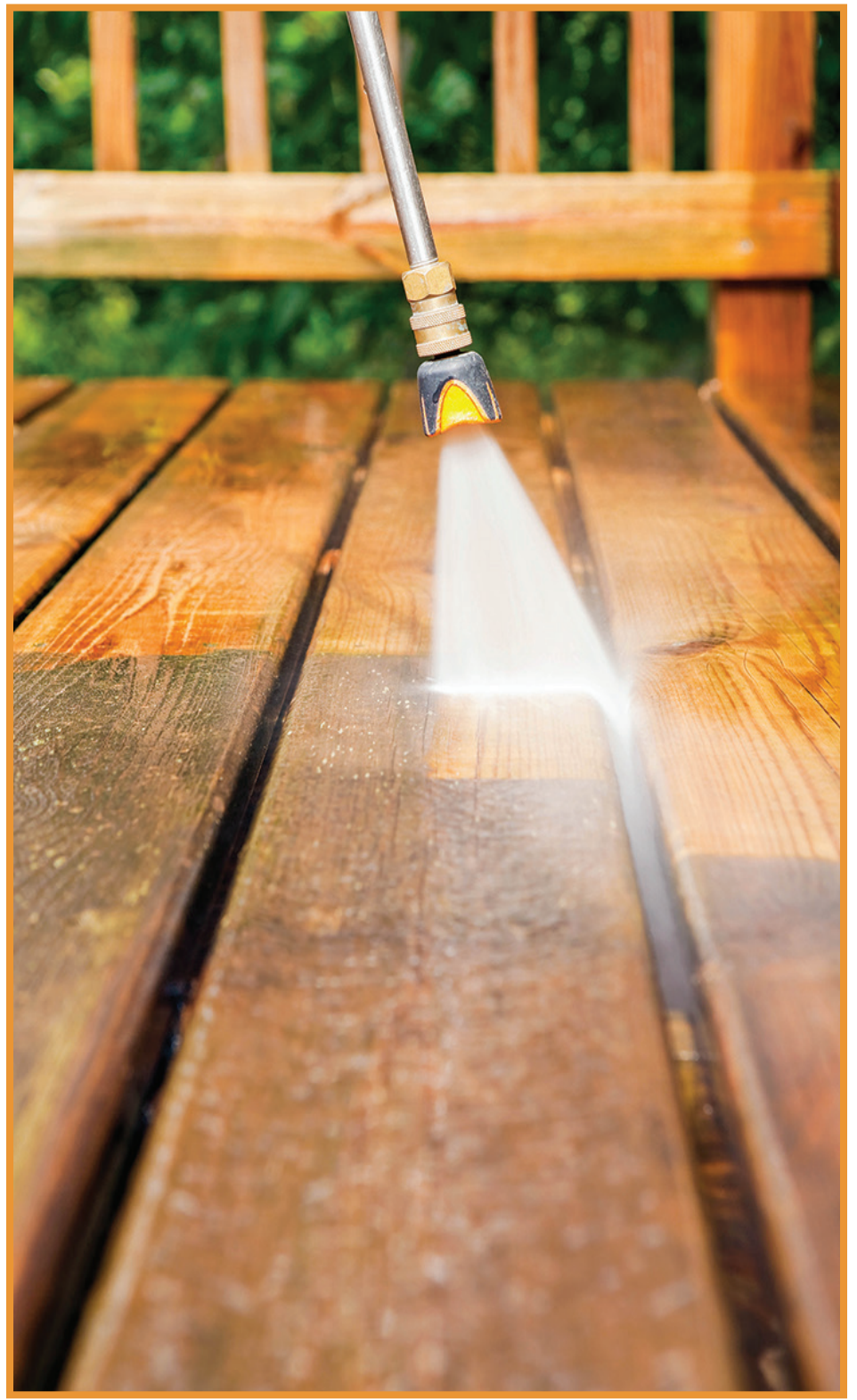
- Read the manual so you fully understand how to operate the washer. Read the instruction manual and practice using the tool before you put it to use on the task at hand. Learn how to operate the machine and all accessories. Figure out how to shut it off in a hurry. Determine if it is safe to use an extension cord on an electric model.

- Wear protective gear. Closed-toe shoes are a must because the water spray can cause lacerations. Be sure the shoes are non-slip or work boots.

Full-length pants and a long-sleeved shirt can protect users from flying debris. Wear eye protection whenever operating the washer. OSHA guidelines recommend a full face shield for water pressure higher than 2,000 psi to avoid eye or head injury. Waterproof gloves also are wise to provide better grip. Ear protection for a gas-powered pressure washer can protect against hearing loss.

- Start off with the widest spray. Pressure washers often include various nozzles or nozzle settings that may range from a 65-degree mist to a zero-degree pinpoint jet. Most people never need to use the most intense jet sprays. Begin washing with the widest angle spray tip, from around two feet away, to test cleaning capabilities, and adjust nozzle and distance as necessary, according to PressureWasher.com

Pressure washers help clean any number of surfaces. Safety must always be the top priority when using these potentially dangerous machines.



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REAP THE REWARDS OF A FLORIDA ROOM IN YOUR HOME

When the sun is shining and the weather is warm, who doesn't want to be outside enjoying all Mother Nature has to offer? The great outdoors often beckons, but it also has bugs. Insects, particularly nuisance bugs like mosquitoes or biting flies, are unwanted visitors when enjoying the great outdoors.

Weather also can put a damper on outdoor plans. It's challenging to get fresh air and enjoy the yard when it's raining or conditions are especially humid. Instead of limiting time spent outdoors to those occasions when conditions are favorable, homeowners can install Florida rooms to maximize their outdoor living potential.

The term "Florida

room" calls to mind different things. Some define it as a walled extension of a home that features a roof — such as a covered patio or lanai. According to Tripod Aluminum, Inc., a manufacturer of aluminum building products, a Florida room also may be a screened-in enclosure that surrounds a pool area and is designed to keep bugs and wildlife out of the water. People also may consider a Florida room a sunroom and it may be screened or feature actual windows that can be opened, according to the resource from Farmhouse to Florida.

Those thinking about renovating to include Florida rooms can consider the following details.

- You don't need to live in Florida. Flor-



ida rooms may be most associated with the Sunshine State, but you don't need to live there to have one. Consider your

climate and build a Florida room that will meet your needs. Do you want to enjoy the space year-round? If so, you might need some sort of heating or cooling to keep things comfortable.

- Decide on the right location. While Florida rooms traditionally are in the backyard, select a spot that works for you. If you want to maximize morning sunrises, for example, locate the room on the side of the home that faces east. If

a view from another side of the house is particularly striking, place the Florida room there.

- Determine your needs. Will you be cooking or entertaining in the Florida room? If so, design a space that will feature cooking and eating areas. Ensure plenty of ventilation for a grill and consider other appliances to reduce the need to make trips into the house. Although the Florida room creates some

measure of weather protection, choose furniture and fixtures that can stand up to outdoor conditions.

- Add privacy as needed. Curtains, greenery, shades and other details can create privacy when you don't want to be visible to neighbors.

Florida rooms add useful space to a home and can help residents connect with nature even when conditions outside are less inviting.

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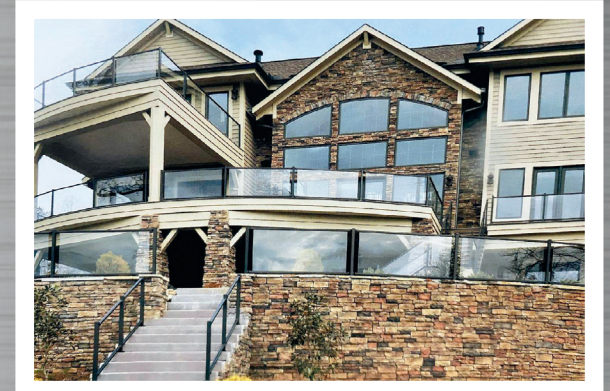


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6 SIGNS YOU MAY NEED A NEW HVAC SYSTEM

There's no place like home, especially when that home is a comfortable and safe haven. One of the ways residents find comfort in their homes is by maintaining the right indoor temperatures, which fluctuate along with the seasons. While there is much to be said about opening windows and doors to let Mother Nature do her thing, indoor comfort is often maintained with an HVAC system.

HVAC stands for heating, ventilation and air conditioning. It can include heat pumps, furnaces and air conditioning units. It is an automated system that works by adjusting a thermostat to regulate air temperature and sometimes humidity, in the home. According to EnviGuard, a commercial contracting provider, HVAC systems also may be used to improve indoor air quality through filtration and oxygen replacement.

As with any mechanical device, an HVAC system has a life span that must be considered. Should any of the following

conditions be present, it is likely time to consult with an HVAC technician to see if repairs or replacement of the entire system is warranted.

1. Age

If the HVAC system is more than 10 years old, it could be time to begin budgeting for a new unit. Many modern, efficient systems may last 12 to 14 years with routine maintenance. But it's good to keep an HVAC system's age in mind so you can readily recognize when it might start to fail.

2. Longer or constant running times

An efficient, properly working system will quickly heat or cool the home and then turn off. A system that is turning on repeatedly or having to run for awhile before the set temperature is reached could be nearing the end of its utility.

3. Strange noises

Groaning, banging or loud humming noises should be addressed. While these noises may indicate

that certain components need maintenance or replacement, they also could be symptoms of age and a system nearing failure.

4. Frequent repair visits

Knowing the HVAC company's repair person by name is a sign that the system has required too much work in recent months. Repeated issues and repairs are probably signs that it's time to consider a system replacement.

5. Higher bills

Sticker shock when receiving electricity or gas bills likely mean the HVAC system isn't working efficiently and might need to be replaced.

6. Poor indoor air quality

If the home is dusty or humid or even if allergies seem to have cropped up out of nowhere, this could indicate a poorly functioning HVAC system.

HVAC systems are vital to keeping indoor environments comfortable and safe. Such systems may exhibit certain signs that indicate they need to be replaced.



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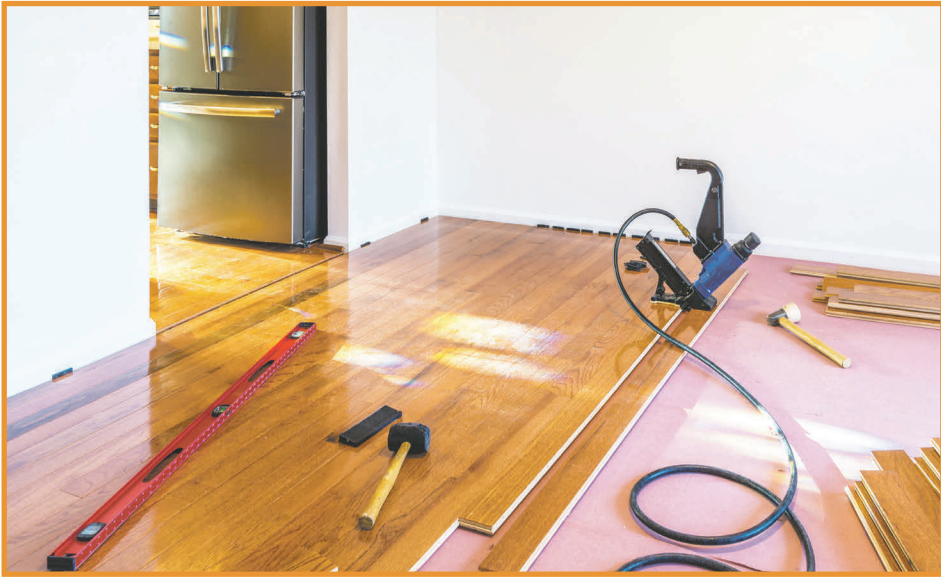
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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS THAT INDICATE FLOORS SHOULD BE REPLACED SOON



Nice flooring draws immediate attention when entering a home. Natural wood floors tend to instantly impress, while the right kitchen flooring materials can create the welcoming feeling many homeowners strive to establish in the most popular room in the home.

Stunning floors are hard to miss, and floors that are well past their prime are equally noticeable. Aging floors may fall somewhere between fading and failing to live up to homeowners' standards. Fading floors may not need to be replaced immediately, but the following are some signs that indicate existing floors are nearing their expiration date.

- **Soft spots:** A floor should not give when stepped on. Soft spots could be indicative of water damage caused by any number of factors. Some water damage is caused by mopping the floor with a soaking wet mop, while burst pipes also contribute to water damage that

can cause soft spots. A single soft spot on the floor may necessitate a relatively simple repair, but various soft spots indicate extensive damage that might be affecting the floor, subflooring or both. In the latter instance, homeowners should consider a full floor replacement.

- **Creaking floors:** Creaking floors are among the more annoying issues that can arise in a home. In such homes, residents feel as though every step they or their housemates take is being announced. In addition, creaking floors can awake light sleepers, including young children. The floor experts at Discount Flooring Depot note that uneven subfloor could be the culprit behind creaking floors. Though that does not necessarily require a floor replacement, it can be hard to lift existing floors and then refit them after the subflooring has been addressed. That's especially so if low-quality laminate flooring was installed. So while

creaking floors may not require a full floor replacement, it's an outcome homeowners who can no longer live with the noise can prepare themselves for.

- **Dated look:** Of course, some floors simply look like the product of a bygone era. Various factors, including location, affect the resale value of a home, but Realtor.com reports that hardwood floors are preferred by both home buyers and renters. In addition, Realtor.com estimates that wood floors could provide a return as high as 80 percent of the initial investment when homeowners sell their homes. If existing flooring looks dated, it might be time to bring it up to speed with something more modern.

A home's flooring is bound to draw the attention of residents and visitors alike. Homeowners who replace their flooring can ensure that attention is drawn for all the right reasons.

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WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT REPLACING GUTTERS

Certain home renovation projects are more glamorous than others. A remodeled kitchen is sure to garner its share of “oohs and aahs,” while a newly paved driveway is much less likely to dazzle guests.

A gutter replacement is another job that might not have the wow factor. But fully functioning gutters are a must and can help to prevent potentially expensive roof damage. Gutters rarely draw attention, but homeowners can keep an eye out for signs that indicate gutters need to be replaced.

Signs gutters should be replaced

Various signs indicate it's time to replace existing gutters. Homeowners should act promptly if any of the following signs arise, as poorly functioning gutters can make it hard for water to get into the downspouts, ultimately pushing it backward and likely underneath roof shingles, where the result can be costly water damage.

- Peeling paint
- Cracks
- Pooling water in

the gutter

- Mildew in the gutter, which can sometimes be seen even from the ground

- Water damage: Water damage on the gutter can be limited to certain spots and will be noticeable on the underside of the gutter

- Soffit damage
- Sagging gutters
- Detached gutters, which can be detached from other pieces or the house
- Rust

Who should replace gutters?

Many home improvements can be completed successfully by skilled do-it-yourselfers, but a gutter replacement is best left to the professionals. Homeowners who live in single-story homes may be able to replace gutters on their own, but the issues that can arise when gutters are not functioning at optimal capacity make this a job best suited to professionals, even in residences without high roofs.

Some gutters may be under a manufacturer's warranty, so homeowners can check to see if their gutters qualify for a

free upgrade. Experience is one of the best reasons to work with a professional gutter installation team. Experienced professionals can identify which gutters are the best fit based on a host of factors, including the pitch of the roof, local conditions and the size of the house. In addition, gutter installation requires the use of various tools that many DIYers may not have on hand, which can cut into the cost savings of doing the project yourself.

Homeowners also should not underestimate the challenges of working on ladders that are high up off the ground. Professionals are accustomed to such challenges, while DIYers may not be comfortable or used to climbing ladders with materials and tools in hand.

A gutter replacement is a worthwhile investment that can ensure rain water efficiently and effectively runs through gutters and away from the roof. Leaving this task to the professionals can ensure the job is done right.



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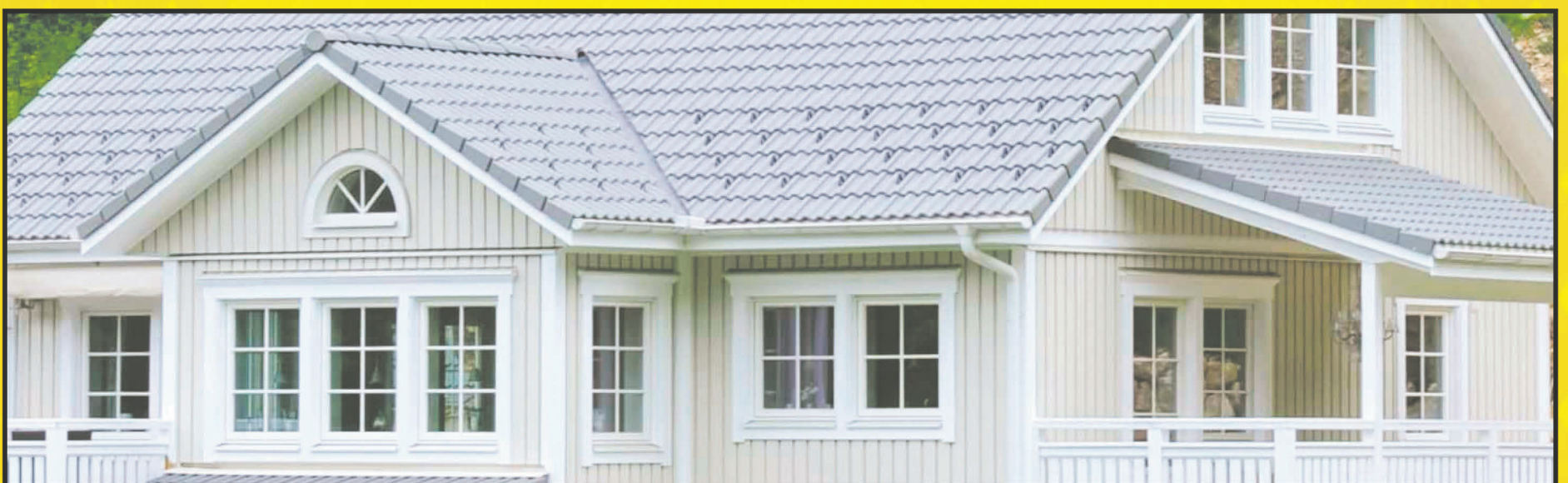
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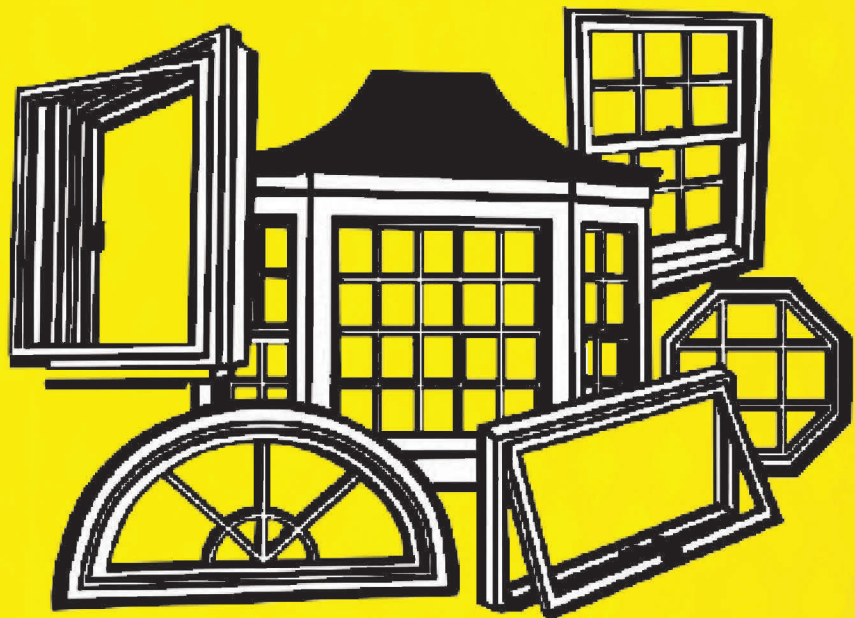
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HOW TO MAINTAIN HARDWOOD FLOORS

Hardwood floors have long been sought after by home buyers. Of course, hardwood floors aren't just for buyers. Homeowners who already have hardwood floors know just how impressive these floors can be, especially when they're well maintained. Maintaining wood floors is not necessarily as straightforward as it may seem and homeowners may benefit from a tutorial on how to keep the floors under their feet looking good.

To polish or not to polish?

Polishing floors is an inexpensive way to keep them looking good. But the home improvement experts at BobVila.com note that not all floors can be polished and determining which ones can depends on the finish. Floors with waterproof barriers such as urethane will benefit from routine polishing. However, floors with penetrating finishes like tung oil will need to be waxed rather than polished.

What finish is on the floor?

The Hardwood Distributor's Associ-

ation recommends a simple way for homeowners to determine which type of finish is on their hardwood floors. Homeowners are advised to rub a finger across the floor. If no smudge appears, then the floor is surface sealed. If a smudge is created, then the floor has been treated with a penetrating seal. The HDA also notes that recently installed wood floors are likely surface sealed.

How often should floors be polished or waxed?

Wood flooring professionals recommend polishing floors that can be polished once every few months. Waxing wood floors does not need to be done as frequently and most can benefit from a fresh coat of wax every 12 to 18 months.

What can I do on a daily basis?

Some simple tricks and daily maintenance can help wood floors maintain their impressive look.

- Utilize floor mats.

The HDA notes that floor mats near entryways can reduce the time it takes to clean



hardwood floors and reduce the wear and tear they endure. For example, tiny particles like dirt can scratch the floor and contribute to the kind of minor damage that adds up to significant scarring over time. Floor mats near entryways ensures that most of that dirt never makes it to the wood floors.

- Vacuum without a beater bar. Some

vacuums contain beater bars, which are designed to pick up human hair, dog hair and other things that conventional vacuums may not be able to pick up. The HDA advises vacuuming without the beater bar, as it can contribute to small scratches in the floor. Sweeping with a high-quality broom or microfiber cloth is another way to pick up dirt with-

out damaging floors.

- Use manufacturer-recommended cleaning products. Local home improvement stores sell a host of hardwood floor cleaning products, but the HDA notes that many flooring manufacturers now sell their own hardwood floor cleaners designed specifically for their floors. These products are likely homeowners' best

choices. Homeowners who can't find them can seek recommendations from a local flooring retailer.

Hardwood floors are attractive for many reasons. And they look even more stunning and last much longer, when homeowners make an effort to maintain them.

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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 percent 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 percent 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.

Foam board/rigid foam panels

Ideal for unfinished walls, such as basement or foundation walls, floors and ceilings, these are boards of polyurethane or polysty-



rene. Foam boards tend to reduce energy consumption more effectively than other types of insulation.

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.

Sprayed foam

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

Loose fill

Loose fill is usually made of fiberglass or cellulose (recycled paper fiber). It is blown or sprayed into place with pneumatic equipment, ac-

cording 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.

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SMALL RENOVATIONS THAT MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Home renovation projects were high on homeowners' priority lists during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout much of 2020, people across the globe were forced to spend much of their time at home as leaders and governments across the globe sought to prevent the spread of COVID-19. More time at home compelled millions of homeowners to invest more in their properties, thus sparking a renovation boom.

By early 2023, the renovation boom that marked the initial days of the pandemic appeared to have burst. In May 2023, the popular home improvement retailer Home Depot reported its sales had fallen by 4.5 percent in the first quarter of the year and that its income had fallen by more than 6 percent from the same period a year earlier. That marked the end of what Home Depot CEO Ted Decker characterized as "a three-year period of unprecedented growth" in the home improvement sector.

Home Depot's de-

cline in sales was attributed to a number of factors, including a pivot among homeowners from large projects to smaller renovations. Inflation and the looming threat of a recession have led many homeowners to emphasize smaller projects. With that in mind, the following are some small renovations that can have a big impact.

- **Storage addition:** Regardless of where storage is added, be it the kitchen or a home office or a laundry room, extra space to keep items out of view can dramatically alter the look of a home. Unused kitchen walls can be transformed with some inexpensive, easily hanged shelves, while some laundry pedestals with storage drawers can help keep washrooms clear of clutter.

- **Polish floors:** Elbow grease might be the biggest expenditure when cleaning hardwood floors. The wood flooring experts at Bona® advise homeowners to polish their floors once every two to four months depending on how much foot traffic



the floors get. A fresh polishing can make floors look brand new and ensures dirt and dust are not hanging around as uninvited houseguests.

- **Paint:** Painting is another inexpensive option for budget-conscious homeowners who want to update their homes. There's no shortage of places in a home, both inside and out,

where a fresh coat of paint can make a statement without breaking the bank. Fading paint on bedroom walls and kitchen cabinets can be painted over with a fresh coat of the same color or even something more vibrant. Outside, apply a fresh coat to a wooden deck or paint over brick siding to create a whole new

look.

- **Molding:** Crown molding can add a touch of elegance to any room. Rooms can be transformed in a single weekend with the installation of new or replacement crown molding. A simple molding installation is a task many do-it-yourselfers can handle on their own, while homeowners with less DIY expe-

rience may benefit from hiring a contractor to create a layered molding look.

Homeowners are pivoting away from costly renovations to more budget-conscious projects. Various less expensive undertakings can transform spaces at a fraction of the cost of more extensive renovations.

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WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT KITCHEN COUNTERTOP MATERIALS

Kitchens are the busiest rooms in most homes. Kitchens have become more than just places to prepare meals, with many functioning as gathering spaces and even go-to dining spots in homes that do not feature formal dining rooms.

So much time spent in the kitchen makes it worthwhile to invest in these popular spaces. Kitchen renovations are high on many homeowners' to-do lists and there's many decisions to make once they commit to redoing the room. When renovating a kitchen, homeowners will have to choose which countertop material they want to install and the following rundown of popular options can help simplify that decision.

Quartz

Quartz is considered a low-maintenance and durable countertop

material. The home improvement experts at This Old House note that quartz countertops are typically 94 percent ground quartz and now come with an honed, sandblasted or embossed treatment, which makes them appealing to homeowners with varying ideas on the ideal look of a kitchen countertop. Quartz can crack if it's not handled properly and edges and corners can chip over time. Rounded edges can minimize the risk of chipping. Costs vary by location and product availability, but quartz typically costs about the same as natural stone.

Granite

Consumer Reports notes that no two slabs of granite are the same and that uniqueness has long appealed to homeowners. Tests run by Consumer Reports found that heat,

cuts and scratches did not harm granite, though this material, like quartz, can crack around edges and corners. Granite is a durable material that, if properly maintained, can last several decades. Granite also is nonporous, which makes it resistant to bacteria.

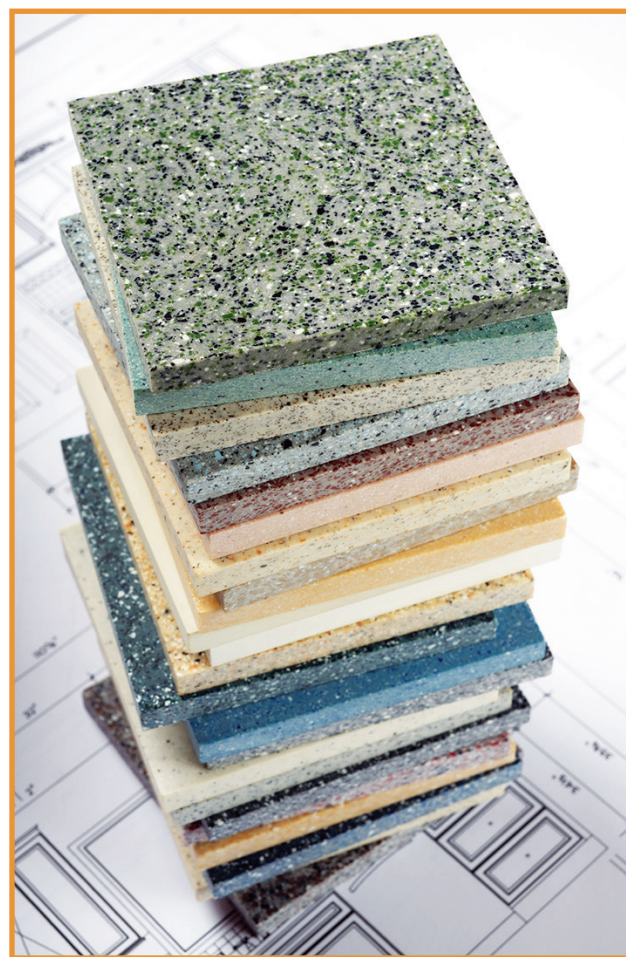
Laminate

Laminate countertops appeal to budget-friendly homeowners and Consumer Reports notes that they're easy to install. Home Depot also notes that laminate countertops come in a wide range of colors, textures and designs. Laminate countertops also are durable, which helps budget-conscious homeowners stretch their dollars even further. Laminate countertops are easily maintained, though it's also easy to permanently damage them with knives,

so Consumer Reports recommends always using a cutting board when preparing meals on laminate.

Butcher Block

Butcher block countertops are among the more unique options homeowners may consider. Sometimes referred to as "wood countertops," butcher block countertops are made from wooden strips that are fused together. The home improvement experts at BobVila.com note that butcher block is among the more affordable materials, but the final cost will be dictated by location and availability. BobVila.com notes that butcher block countertops are highly sensitive to liquid, so exposure to moisture should be limited. Sealing butcher block countertops immediately after installation can help protect against bacteria and warping.



Though butcher blocks can be high maintenance, many homeowners find the unique look is well worth the extra elbow grease.

Kitchen countertops

can define how the room looks and homeowners have many options to choose from when designing a new kitchen.

HOW HOMEOWNERS CAN TURN ATTICS INTO LIVABLE SPACES

Houses typically feature various areas that are traditionally designed for storage, such as garages, basements and attics. However, with some renovation, these spaces can be transformed into livable areas.

Homeowners who would like to convert attics into livable spaces need to take certain things into consideration before starting an improvement project. While the attic may seem like it has plenty of room and is structurally sound enough to walk in, that's not necessarily so. To be converted into usable living space, an attic must be brought up to the standards of modern building codes, according to the design experts at Board & Vellum. Retrofitting beams and insulation can eat up available

space in an attic. Thus, it is best to consult an expert to see if an attic can be converted.

Furthermore, an attic that was not initially designed as a room when the house was built can add extra "load" upstairs if it is converted. That could present certain structural problems. That means a structural engineer also must be consulted to see if adding beams, flooring and drywall will necessitate other changes elsewhere in the home to accommodate the extra load.

In order to have a functional attic room, building codes will dictate that it needs to be accessible by a full-size staircase. Also, it will need to have another exit in case of an emergency so that will likely be an accessible window, according to the home information site The Fill. Home-

owners' budgets and renovation plans will need to factor into these considerations. Homeowners also are advised to check local permits to determine what else may be required to go forward. It is best to follow the rules. Lack of a permit for work can affect the ability to sell a home down the line.

Individuals also should plan for heating and cooling upgrades as the home will need to have ductwork installed in the attic, or at the least, a stand-alone heating and cooling unit. As heat rises, it can get quite warm in an attic, so ventilation and comfort should be considered. The attic will need to be wired for electricity for lighting and other needs. Air sealing and additional insulation can the attic space more comfortable as well.

Consult with a qualified electrician and an HVAC technician and have an energy audit done to discuss needs.

Attic renovations

can give homeowners more space in their homes, which can be used as offices, bedrooms or cozy corners. This is no small

undertaking and all of the right steps need to be followed to ensure a legal, safe and successful renovation.

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3 GREAT REASONS TO REPLACE AGING WINDOWS



Windows in a home are easy to take for granted. Unless windows are showing signs of wear and tear or so dirty that it's hard to see through them, it's easy for them to go unnoticed. However, replacement windows can add value to a home and even save homeowners a substantial amount of money.

Much of the savings that can be attributed to new windows is related to energy efficiency. The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy estimates that as much as 30 percent of heating and cooling energy can be lost through heat gain or heat loss, and aging, inefficient windows contribute to such losses. Replacing those windows can save homeowners substantial amounts of money, with one expert at Angi estimating that installation of energy efficient windows can help trim energy bills by as much as 12 percent.

Cost savings are often noted when firms promote replacement windows, but homeowners should know that replacement windows also

provide numerous additional benefits. In fact, the following are three great reasons for homeowners to consider upgrading their windows today.

1. New windows help reduce carbon footprint. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that replacing single-pane windows with ENERGY STAR® certified windows can help to reduce CO2 emissions by a significant margin. The EPA reports that such windows can save the equivalent of as much as 6,200 pounds of CO2 emissions thanks to reduced energy consumption associated with the new windows.

2. New windows can brighten a home. Natural light brightens a room and can make it appear larger. Homeowners who have grown accustomed to old windows may not realize how little light such windows let into their homes. Aging windows can become foggy over time and prevent natural light from getting into a home. That can create a gloomy feel and force homeowners to turn up the thermostat

on cold days. New windows brighten the home and the natural light that pours in on a cold day can help heat the home at the same time.

3. New windows cut down on noise. Window manufacturers are always on the lookout for ways to produce windows that make homes more comfortable. Noise reduction is one way to accomplish that goal, and Consumer Reports notes that triple-glazed windows can help to dramatically reduce outside noise. Homeowners who currently have single-pane windows may be astonished by the difference in outside noise levels when upgrading to triple-glazed windows, which contain a third layer of glass. That third layer of glass significantly reduces noise levels, making triple-glaze windows ideal for homes on busy streets or those in urban areas with lots of foot traffic.

Replacement windows pay numerous dividends. Homeowners can reap these rewards and others by replacing aging windows.

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