



# Spring & Home & Garden

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# SPRUCING UP THE YARD FOR SPRING!



**KATELYNNE WAGERS**  
KWAGERS@LACLEDERECORD.COM

Making the lawn look ready for Spring starts with a few key components, planting spring flowers, and preparing the yard for mowing over the summer.

Patriot Lawn Care is a veteran owned and operated lawn care business here in Lebanon and their focus is on superior quality and making Lebanon beautiful one lawn at a time.

Patriot Lawn Care can assist residents who do not have the time to prepare their lawn for spring with services such as mowing, trimming, edging, blowing, fertilization and leaf removal.

Jason Smothers, the owner of Patriot Lawn Care, said, "Our customers satisfaction is our highest priority. We know how important your lawn is to you and we will work hard to make it

looks its best."

The business started in 2016 and they have three employees that work diligently to beautify lawns in the Lebanon area.

Smothers said, "We proudly served our country as veterans and now we serve the Lebanon area. We are not quantity driven. We have a few lawns we work on but we are quality driven."

Citizens can receive a free quote for their yard by contacting Jason Smothers at 573-317-6311 or by going to the website [www.patriotlcs.com](http://www.patriotlcs.com)

Smothers said, "Price ranges vary because every job is different. It depends on the size of your yard."

If professional lawn care services are not needed, Smothers says the one piece of advice he has to get the lawn ready for the spring would be, "Mow your yard often, blow the leaves off

early so your grass can grow and fertilize your lawn."

Another way to spruce up the yard for springtime is to set the garden up for success. No matter what is being planted, fruits, veggies, herbs, or flowers, it is important to prepare your beds early.

The Sunbonnet gardening club has been in the Lebanon area since 1960 and their main goal is to beautify the community, educate the community and make social connections with friends.

Margie Wild, president of the club, and Sheila Buecher, vice president of the club say, "There are no mistakes in nature, just experiments. A garden is what you perceive as pretty, there is no right or wrong."

In order to garden successfully, Wild says you will need seeds and tools. "You can get seeds just about



LCR Photo/ Katelynne Wagers



Top, Margie Wild, President of the Sunbonnet club and Sheila Buecher, Vice president of the club. Above right submitted photo, Patriot lawn care service is a veteran owned lawn business that can help get your yard ready for spring!

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anywhere. Bakers' Creek Seeds down south 5, Lowes and even Dollar Tree. Nixa hardware store is our favorite place for tools, and they also sell seeds."

Wild says, "You have to clean your beds first. Now is a good time to do it. The bugs and insects help your garden but if you have any disease in there you want to get it cleaned out."

When cleaning out the garden beds however, Wild warns against heavily chemical based products stating it can harm the soil.

If members of the community already have a garden started, Wild and Buecher say adding texture, color and decorations to the garden is an easy way to make it look better.

"It is good to have different heights, colors, flags and solar lights to help catch people's eyes. Lawn art, benches, edging stones and signs can help spruce up your garden. It is really unique to the individual. If you like something, put it in

your garden."

Buecher says that bees, spiders and worms are great for a garden and if they are near the plants, it means the garden is healthy.

When getting ready to start a garden, Wild and Buecher's advice for community members is to start small. "You need to start small because you will need to condition your ground to see what will grow. You can get your soil tested to see what will work best for your yard. Also, when you buy plants make sure you read the plant descriptions so you know what the plant needs or else it won't grow well."

Buecher stated, "A lot of times, gardening isn't about the beauty it is about the reward you get seeing the growth. Sometimes you don't know if you did it right and you have to wait and see. When it does sprout, you feel really proud. You have to be patient."

Kasey Hicks, the youngest master gardener in La-

clade County, is a 17-year-old Lebanon High School student who spends his extra time, with his hands in the dirt.

He says, "I really like gardening. We have kept house plants for my whole life and I have always been interested in nature and plants and things."

Kasey spends his days at LHS, where he is on the tennis team. But he also spends time with his mom Kelly Hicks at the MU Extension office with the Master Gardeners club.

Kasey encourages young kids to garden when they have free time. "You can start with anything you can get your hands on, really. Something free from a friend, or a neighbor. That is what we have done. You just have to figure out what works for you and what doesn't."

Kelly says Kasey's room is covered in house plants that he takes care of by himself. "His plants are just beautiful. Everything he

grows just does really good. I buy him clearance plants at Lowes and then they just go crazy and look beautiful."

Kasey says that the experience with the master gardeners club has also helped him in his academic life. "The things we learned about plant structure, soil and fertilizing is what we were talking about in my biology class. It all kind of builds on itself which is really helpful."

He says gardening has been a really fun past time but has also helped him learn new things.

Flowers Kasey recommends planting in the spring include daffodils, hyacinths, and tulips. He says you don't need a lot of tools to get started because most of the work can be done with your hands.

Kasey says he will continue his education after high school by going to college for either plant or environmental sciences while also staying with the master gardeners.



Submitted Photo

LHS Senior and master Gardner, Kasey Hicks with his house plants.

He states that being with the club has helped him learn so many things and he would recommend it to anyone wanting to get into gardening.

"Most of my gardening happens in the summer because I am mostly free

but whenever you have free time you can get out there and work on it. It really helps to not get too ambitious and to start small. It takes a lot of trial and error. Making mistakes will help you learn."

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LCR Photo/Steve Smith

From the left, Steve Lee of Mohawk Industries and Gay Boston of Falcon Floor Covering with some of the hardwood floor coverings offered at Falcon Floor Covering.

# TRENDS IN FLOOR COVERING FAVOR VINYL PLANKS, AREA RUGS

**STEVE SMITH**  
SSMITH@LACLEDERECORD.COM

Homeowners have many choices when it comes to floor coverings.

Carpeting, vinyl and wood floors are some of the options for consumers looking to upgrade their homes.

Tory Smith of Falcon Floor Covering said waterproof vinyl planking and hardwood are currently popular with customers.

"People like the vinyl planking because of the durability, the fact that it's waterproof and can be used in any room in the house," she said. "The versatility of it is vast, it can be used in

basements, bathrooms, kitchens, laundry rooms, all those places that you want a wood look, but you've never been able to before because of the moisture issue. You don't have to worry about it with the vinyl plank because it's completely waterproof."

Smith said carpeting is still being used, but it is not as popular it once was.

"A lot more people are doing hard surfaces than carpeting, we do still see quite a few people that are doing carpeting in the bedrooms, but the majority of what we're seeing is people putting hard surface throughout the home, except for bed-

rooms," she said. "Carpeting will always be around, they're not going to get rid of it, but it's not as popular as it once was because people really like that hard surface look right now."

She said the trend is to use hard surface and put an area rug on top of it.

"When you purchase an area rug, that is something that in a couple of years you can get a new one if you're tired of the coloration," she said. "It's a lot easier to change your area rug than it is to change your carpet out. It's a lot less expensive, it's a lot easier on you because you don't have to move as much furniture and it can give

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you a completely different look in your room without having to go through all the headache and expense of actually changing out the entire floor."

She said another reason people choose the vinyl plank is its durability, especially for people with children or pets.

"It's a really good option if you have pets, you don't have to worry about them splashing their water bowls or if they have an accident, you don't have to worry about it damaging your floor, it's extremely low maintenance and easy to clean," Smith said.

She said they are also seeing a resurgence of interest in real hardwood floors.

"They add a lot of value to your home, so if you're considering selling your home in the next five years, getting a hardwood floor might be a good investment



Shown are some of the floor materials available at Richardson Carpeting.

LGR Photo/Steve Smith

because it adds a lot of resale value to the home," she said. "It also adds a lot of warmth to the home as well, it's warmer

for your feet to walk on, you're not chilled when you get up in the morning and walk across it, unlike tile."

She said there is a huge range of choices for vinyl plank, including wood grain and tile.

"You're not limited to

wood grain, if you get the vinyl plank, you can get some that looks like a tile and then you get a durable, waterproof floor

for your entire home, but have different looks," she said.

Ben Smith of Richardson Carpet also said vinyl planks are popular with customers.

"They have a lot of wood looks in vinyl planks, they've got a lot of options as far as the edges on them," he said. "They have these products in tile looks, formats for bathrooms, utility rooms and kitchens."

He said a lot of people install the same vinyl material throughout the house with appropriate styles for each room.

"It is a virtually waterproof material, it doesn't buckle or swell at the seams. It's a durable surface," he said. "it's easy to clean and maintain."

He also said carpeting is being mostly used in bedrooms.

"It's softer on the feet when you get out of bed, versus hard surfaces," he said.

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# THE BASICS OF FERTILIZING A LAWN

Spring marks the return of lawn and garden season. Lawns often bear the brunt of winter's wrath, so spring is a great time to nurse them back to health, and fertilizing can be an essential component of that process.

Fertilizing a lawn can be intimidating. An array of fertilizers, with each seemingly designed to address a different issue, can make homeowners' heads spin when visiting their local lawn and garden center. However, fertilizing is a very simple task that any homeowner can tackle. In fact, fears about fertilizing are often unfounded and can be overcome with some basic knowledge of the process.

- Identify which type of grass is in the yard. The home improvement



experts at HGTV note that turfgrass is divided into two categories:

cool-season grass and warm-season grass. A local lawn and garden

center can help homeowners identify which type of grass is in the yard, and this often depends on location. Fescue, bluegrass and perennial ryegrass are some examples of cool-season grasses, while Bermuda, bahia, St. Augustine, and zoysia are considered warm-season grasses. Identifying which type of grass is in the lawn is important because that will indicate when to fertilize. Cool-season grasses are typically best fertilized in early spring, while warm-season lawns can benefit from an application just before especially warm temperatures arrive.

- Survey the lawn to identify which spreader to use. A small yard or a thriving lawn with only a few bald or unsightly

patches may not need a full application of fertilizer. In such instances, a hand spreader can suffice. For larger lawns and areas, a broadcast spreader is the ideal option. Spreaders have multiple settings, and the fertilizer package will indicate which setting to utilize when using the product.

- Test the soil prior to purchasing fertilizer. The lawn experts at Pennington® note that a simple soil test can reveal soil pH and phosphorous and potassium levels. Soil tests can be purchased at most home improvement stores and lawn and garden centers, and they can help homeowners determine which fertilizer will most benefit their lawns.

- Water the lawn prior to fertilizing. The experts at Scotts® recommend

a good watering a few days prior to fertilizing a lawn. Such an approach ensures the soil is ready to accept the fertilizer once it's applied.

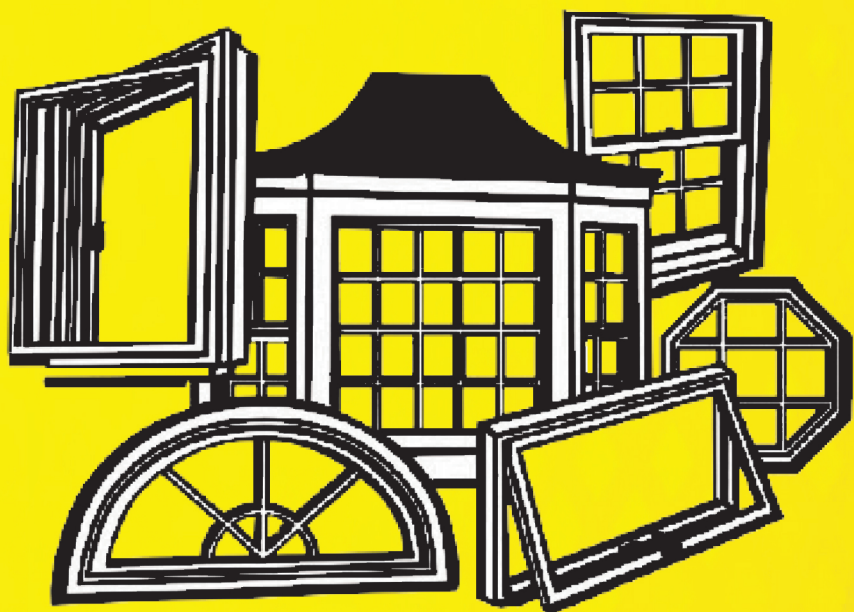
- Follow the instructions carefully. Detailed instructions are typically provided on fertilizer product packaging. Once homeowners have identified and purchased the product they need, they can simply follow the instructions on the packaging, including how and when to water after application, which can make fertilizing less intimidating.

Fertilizing in spring can help a lawn recover from the previous summer and winter, ensuring it's lush and green when summer entertaining season arrives.



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# TIPS TO PICK THE RIGHT PLANTS FOR YOUR LANDSCAPE

Each year, gardening enthusiasts anxiously await the arrival of spring. Spring is a great season to plant new flowers, plants, grasses, and trees, making it a popular time of year to spend sunny days out in the yard.

Veteran gardeners may know their landscapes well and be able to pick the right plants on their own. Novices may need a little help as they look to give their landscapes a whole new look. The following are some helpful tips to help homeowners pick the right plants for their landscapes.

- Conduct a site evaluation. A colorful landscape featuring an array of plants and flowers can be eye-catching and add curb appeal to a property. However, where plants will be planted is a significant



variable that must be considered before homeowners choose what to plant. The Center for Agriculture, Food, and the Environment at the University of Massachusetts Amherst notes that site evaluation is the first step when picking

plants. A number of factors must be evaluated, including light availability; water availability; exposure to the elements, including wind and extreme temperatures; and competition from existing vegetation, among other things. Document

these variables prior to picking plants. For example, take note of the area you plan to plant to see if it is full sun or partial shade, and then pick plants whose growing conditions align with those you observe.

- Look at more than one look. Aesthetic appeal might be what homeowners most desire from their landscapes, but that appeal is only achieved when the right plants are chosen for a space. If the wrong plants are chosen, they're unlikely to thrive or they could threaten existing vegetation, thus compromising the overall appeal of the property. Native plants can often handle local weather conditions, so prioritize natives over more exotic plants whose key attribute is aesthetic appeal. If jaw-dropping

aesthetic appeal is your top priority, speak with a local landscaping professional about which natives can provide that without compromising surrounding vegetation.

- Consider maintenance prior to planting. Maintenance is another variable gardeners must consider. Newly planted trees may require substantial watering until they've fully established their roots, and some homeowners may not have time for that. In addition, certain plants may require a considerable amount of pruning in order to create and maintain the look homeowners desire. Individuals must be willing to invest the time and effort necessary to maintain new plantings that require such diligence. If not, look for plants that don't require

much maintenance while keeping in mind that even low-maintenance plants still require some effort and attention.

- Consider local wildlife. If your lawn is routinely visited by local wildlife, then look for plants that won't look like a meal to these welcome, if uninvited, guests. For example, if you routinely see deer lounging around in your backyard, look for deer-resistant plants. This is a good way to protect your investment, of both time and money, and ensure minimal wildlife traffic through your newly landscaped yard.

Spring gardens are awe-inspiring, especially when homeowners embrace various strategies for successful planting.

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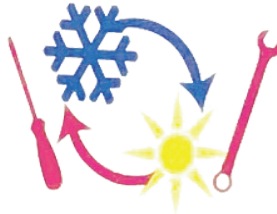
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# HOW TO HANDLE A LENGTHY RENOVATION

The global pandemic reignited people's passions for home renovations, as they directed dollars that would normally have been spent elsewhere into the places where they were now spending the most time — their homes. According to the 10th annual Houzz & Home survey of more than 70,000 respondents in the United States, higher-budget projects cost around \$85,000 or more in 2020, compared with \$80,000 in the two years prior. Kitchen projects were the most popular among renovating homeowners.

Even though many COVID-19-related restrictions have lifted and life has largely returned to regular programming, renovations remain a popular investment. Home-



owners embarking on home renovation projects understand that a certain measure of upheaval is to be expected, but some may not fully anticipate the impact that renovations have on daily life.

The following are some tips for making it through a lengthy renovation.

- Discuss the timeline with contractors. It may be easier to make a plan for how much life will be disrupted if you have an

idea of how long the renovation will be (if everything goes according to plan). Sit down with contractors and have them spell out the minutiae of the project so you'll be able to anticipate what's going on day-to-day.

- Start at the right time. Some contractors may say they can fit your project into their schedules in between other jobs. While this may seem convenient and timely, your work may be put on hold if there are delays with the other job or jobs. Instead, it may be better to hold off until the contractors can devote the bulk of their attention to your renovation.

- Recreate commonly used spaces elsewhere. A kitchen or a bathroom remodel often requires giving up spaces that are

used throughout a typical day. Unless you have a spare full bathroom or kitchen, you'll need to make due. Set a microwave, tabletop electric burner and a coffee pot on a folding table in the garage or utility room. Rent or purchase a small refrigerator where you can store a few necessities. Ask your contractor to set up a makeshift outdoor shower so you have a place to get clean when the bathroom is under construction.

- Pack up and cover. Remodeling one room may cause a trickle down effect on other areas. Dust from drywall sanding can infiltrate many rooms in the home. Pack and label boxes with items not immediately needed and store them in another area. Cover most things

so a film of dust won't form on them.

- Adjust your schedule. Sleeping in will be a thing of the past for the duration of the renovation, as may be working from a home office. Try to get out of the work zone as much as possible for new scenery and respites from the noises and smells.

- Ease up on cleaning standards. It's challenging to keep a home clean during a renovation. Relax standards and expect a mess for some time. Explain to guests what they'll find if they drop by.

Renovations can disrupt life, but often are well worth the sacrifices homeowners must make to see them through to completion.

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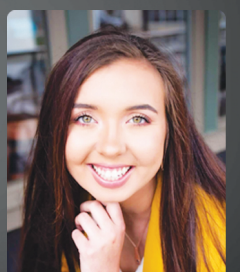
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# QUICK & EASY WAYS TO GIVE YOUR KITCHEN A NEW LOOK

Kitchens are often described as the busiest rooms in a home. Kitchens are where meals are prepared and tend to be go-to gathering spots on holiday get-togethers and during other events when homeowners host family and friends.

With so much time spent in the kitchen, it's easy to see how homeowners might grow a little bored by these rooms. The cost of a kitchen remodel won't be cheap, as the home improvement resource Angi.com notes that the typical cost of such a project in the United States is between \$13,000 and \$38,000. Angi.com estimates even indicate that a high-end remodel could cost homeowners as much as \$61,000. That's beyond many homeowners' bud-

gets. But the good news is that there are many quick and easy, not to mention less expensive, ways to give a kitchen a new look.

- Repaint and restyle the cabinets. Cabinet space is an undeniably precious commodity in a kitchen, especially as more and more homeowners embrace their inner chef and cook more complicated meals at home. After all, the more expansive a home chef's culinary repertoire, the more space that person needs to store all the tools of the cooking trade. A full cabinet replacement is unnecessary if the cabinets are still functional and not overcrowded, so repainting them can be a great way to give the kitchen a new look while keeping costs reasonable. During the painting proj-

ect, homeowners can install new cabinet knobs and/or drawer pulls to freshen up the style of the cabinets even further.

- Install under-cabinet lighting. Another inexpensive way to give a kitchen a new look is to install under-cabinet lighting. Under-cabinet lighting serves both an aesthetic and practical purpose. From a purely aesthetic standpoint, under-cabinet lighting can make a kitchen feel more warm and keep the kitchen illuminated when meals aren't being prepared and homeowners don't want to have their overhead lights on but still want to be able to navigate the kitchen safely. During meal prep, under-cabinet lighting can illuminate counters so it's easier to chop, peel and perform



island countertop with bar stools or a breakfast nook with cushioned seats, replacing the seating is a budget-friendly job that can create a new look when entering the room. Countertop bar stools come in many styles, so giving this area of the kitchen a new feel can be as simple as shifting from classic, high-back stools to more modern swivel stools with a chrome base. For the breakfast nook, replacing a light-colored bench cushion with a bolder alternative can instantly transform the look of the space.

Kitchen remodels can break the bank. But there's a host of budget-friendly ways for cost-conscious homeowners to revitalize these popular spaces in their homes.

other prep tasks.

- Replace existing backsplash. Replacing backsplash is another simple, inexpensive and effective way to give a kitchen a new feel. Homeowners can opt for something neutral that won't upset their existing decor or go with a more

bold backsplash that immediately draws the attention of anyone who enters the room. This simple job can be done by the average do-it-yourselfer and the cost of new backsplash won't break the bank.

- Replace existing seating. Whether you have an

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