

Fall Home Improvement

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The Minden Press-Herald
The Bossier Press-Tribune**

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Bedroom MAKEOVER

After 15 years of having an oak wall bed, it was time for a new look. We started with the floors - took out carpet and replaced with Brentwood Pine laminate flooring. Painted the walls Sherwin-Williams White Dove flat and the trim same color, but semi-gloss. Replaced furniture with updated look from Johnsons Furniture. Added new bedding, lamps, mirrors over nightstands and decor from HomeGoods. A Ballard grey antelope runner rug leads to the sitting area complete with a drinking table and throw. Lined silver grey curtains are hung on gold rods. We added a pop of mustard for our accent color. The look continues in the bathroom. See page 4.



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



Bathroom MAKEOVER



We carried on the color scheme and style from the master bedroom right into the master bath. Same paint colors on the walls and cabinets as the bedroom. Changed the silver hardware to flat black. Spray painted the tower holders to match. Added live greenery in the window, a mustard stool with a throw pillow, mustard hand towels, black and gold metal leaf decor and a black and grey ginger jar between the sinks. Black framed abstract prints matted in gold leaf hang over the tub. Added the Ballard grey antelope rug to tie together with the matching runner in the bedroom. All the home decor is from local stores around Bossier and Shreveport.

Affordable features to consider when revamping your kitchen

Kitchens are popular gathering spots in many homes. That popularity is reflected in various ways, including how many homeowners choose to remodel their kitchens.

A 2020 report from the home renovation and design resource Houzz found that kitchens were the most popular room to renovate in 2021. Homeowners considering kitchen remodels should know that the Houzz report also indicated that spending on kitchen remodels increased by 27 percent in 2021.

Homeowners concerned by the cost of remodeling a kitchen should know that there are ways to give kitchens a whole new feel without breaking the bank.

APPLIANCES

Consumer Reports notes that luxury home buyers expect high-end features, including professional ranges and built-in refrigerators that match the surrounding cabinetry. However, many mainstream brands offer “faux pro” features that can equal more expensive alternatives. Consumer Reports even notes that many budget-friendly faux pro appliances outperformed their high-end counterparts in terms of reliability.



COUNTERTOPS

Countertops tend to capture the eye's attention when walking into a kitchen. Outdated and/or damaged countertops grab that attention for

the budget.

Kitchen remodels can be expensive. But there are many affordable ways to revamp a kitchen.

all the wrong reasons, while updated countertops made from today's most popular materials provide that wow factor homeowners seek. If granite is a must-have, Consumer Reports notes that homeowners can save substantial amounts of money by choosing granite from remnants at the stone yard. If marble is your ideal countertop, save money by choosing a domestic product as opposed to one imported from overseas.

CABINETS

Custom-built cabinets may be a dream, but they tend to be a very expensive one. Such cabinets are designed to adhere to the dimensions of the kitchen, and Consumer Reports notes that they can cost tens of thousands of dollars. If that estimate would bust your budget, examine the current layout of the existing cabinets. If the layout is fine but the cabinets need work, you can give them a whole new look by refinishing them. If the cabinets must go, stock units or semi-custom cabinets can provide a new look without busting

Holiday gifts to spark home improvement ideas

People spent more time at home in 2020 than they likely have in years past. This provided homeowners with plenty of time to ponder potential upgrades to their homes. After taking inventory of their lifestyles, surroundings and furnishings, people have embarked on construction projects or home interior design renovations in record numbers.

Holiday gifts that cater to projects around the house are likely to be highly valued this holiday season. Here are some ideas for home improvement-related gifts.

- Home improvement retailer gift card: Home improvement centers are one-stop shopping for do-it-yourselfers. To help offset the cost



of supplies, gift-givers can give a gift card to a neighborhood hardware store.

- Magazine subscription: There are plenty of ideas on the internet,

but a subscription to a home remodeling or interior design magazine puts inspiration right in homeowners' hands. Pages can be marked or cut out and used on idea boards.

- Tools and supplies: Homeowners just starting out may benefit from the basics. Stores often sell starter tool kits that can be used in home improvement-themed baskets. Experienced DIYers may have a special tool in mind that is outside their budget right now, like a chop saw or cordless power drill. Purchasing one of these items can help projects

move along more smoothly.

- Expert consultation: Who can't use a little help with their home remodeling efforts? Give the gift of a consultation from an interior designer or professional contractor to help complete plans that may be a little out of reach for the average DIYer.

- Big-ticket item: Some friends and family members may want to pool their resources and offer loved ones an over-the-top gift. This can include a backyard playset for children, a storage shed, a pool installation, or even a new appliance package. Gift ideas are endless and only limited by budget.

- Room re-do: All it may take is some new linens or accents to transform a room. From throw pillows to curtains to wall art, give the gift of an easy room makeover.

Riding the momentum of increased home improvement projects from the past several months, holiday shoppers can choose home-related gift ideas to keep the projects and ideas flowing.

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Things You Must Know When Painting a House Exterior

Does your house need a new coat of exterior paint? Is the paint flaking or fading, or do you just want to change up the color scheme? No matter the reason, a new exterior paint job can really improve the looks of your home and enhance its curb appeal.

Are you thinking of doing the job yourself? Painting your home's exterior surfaces and trim can be a big job. It requires lots of time and effort, and if it's not done right, it will look shoddy.

You may not realize all the steps necessary to get quality results from your exterior paint project. We've listed them here to inform you what the professionals do to achieve success. And as a warning that if any steps in the process are skipped, you may not like the outcome.

1. GET ALL THE MATERIALS AND TOOLS

Before you even start, it's best to make sure you have everything necessary to complete the project from start to finish. You don't want to have to stop and go to the paint or hardware store for something you forgot.

Some items you'll need include:

- Primer
- Exterior paint
(flat or eggshell plus exterior semi-gloss)
- Pressure washer
- Paint sprayer
- Paintbrushes and rollers

- Painter's tape
- Drop cloths
- Plastic sheeting
- Ladder
- Paint scraper
- Epoxy filler
- Medium-grit sanding block
- Putty knife
- Exterior caulking
- Caulk gun

Make sure you purchase enough of each item for the square footage of your house. Also, you may need more than one ladder, or even scaffolding, if you have a two-story house.

2. CLEAN SURFACES

The paint will adhere better and go on smoother on a clean surface. Use a pressure washer to remove debris, dirt, and dust. Work from top to bottom, overlapping each stroke for full coverage.

3. REPAIR DAMAGES

You'll need to fill in any holes or cracks with epoxy filler with a putty knife. Allow epoxy to dry, then sand the surface.

4. PROTECT SURROUNDING AREA

Use drop cloths and plastic sheeting to protect landscaping, outdoor furnishings, or other items in the paint area that can't be moved. Use painter's tape to keep paint from getting on trim, doors, and windows.

5. SCRAPE OFF LOOSE PAINT

Use a paint scraper to remove any chipped paint. You may need to sand

down these scraped surfaces afterward.

6. FILL IN CRACKS

You'll need to caulk the gaps between siding and trim, and around doors and windows.

7. PRIME IF NEEDED

Primer is not always needed; for example, if you're repainting with the same color or a darker color. However, going to a lighter shade will need a coat of primer. You can use the paint sprayer to apply the primer; however, because of its thickness, you may need to thin the primer out for easier application.

8. PAINT THE SIDING

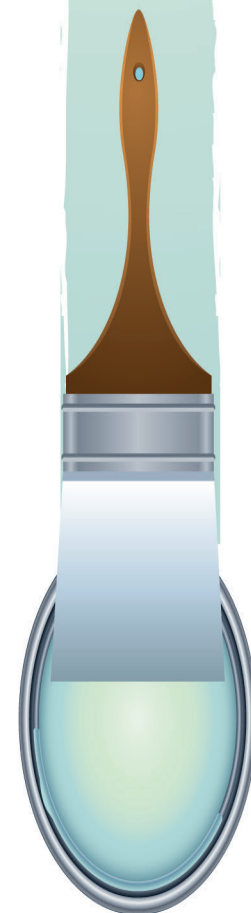
Fill the paint sprayer with the flat or eggshell exterior paint and spray from top to bottom, overlapping each stroke. Depending on the color of paint, you may need two coats.

9. PAINT THE TRIM

Once the painted siding is dry, remove the sheeting and painter's tape from the windows, trim, and doors. Apply two coats of exterior semi-gloss paint to the trim with a paintbrush.

10. CLEAN UP!

Once every exterior surface is painted, as desired, it's time to clean up the area. Remove any drop cloths that cover non-painted items or areas. Clean up any spills. Remove all tools and materials from the work site.



9 Must-Do Fall Home Improvement Projects

Home improvement and maintenance is a year-round endeavor, but there's no shame in admitting that some seasons are more conducive than others to puttering around your house and yard. Those of us who live in the South, for example, know that summer is ideal for plenty of things, but a labor-intensive house project is not one of them.

Autumn, on the other hand, is a great time of year for tackling fall home improvement projects. Temperatures are perfect—not too hot and not too cold—and the humidity no longer feels like a hot, damp blanket tossed on your head as soon as you walk outside.

1. Get rid of single-pane windows

When the winter season arrives, you want to keep the cold air outside, but that can be difficult to do if you have outdated single-pane windows. These windows don't keep homes well

insulated.

2. Replace missing shingles

Strong storms or winds can dislodge shingles or even blow them away entirely. If you've already lost a few shingles here and there, or if your roof is nearing the end of its expected lifespan, hire a roofing contractor to inspect the roof and make any necessary repairs.

3. Trim foliage

Overgrown bushes, trees, and shrubs can wreak havoc on your house during a storm. One rogue branch or limb is all it takes to cause thousands of dollars worth of damage.

The best way to avoid this type of damage is to have a professional landscaping or tree services company prune the trees and shrubs on your property—especially those near your house or overhanging the roof—and remove dead or low-hanging branches.

4. Restore your carpet

Keep your carpet fresh, clean, and looking as good as the day it was installed by scheduling a fall carpet cleaning service. Regular vacuuming is important, too, but the average residential vacuum cleaner can't deliver the results of a professional cleaning.

5. Unclog your gutters

From late winter to early summer, your gutters get clogged with everything from leaves to dirt. Get your gutters ready for winter rain and snowmelt (and keep them functioning properly year-round) with the help of a professional gutter cleaning company.

Cleaning gutters on your own puts you at risk for bodily injury, and with the wrong equipment, you can do significant damage to your roof. Let a pro scale the ladder and tackle the job for you.

6. Protect your perennials

Perennial flowers and plants give your landscape a pop of color and visual appeal—and since they return every year, perennials are a great, low-maintenance option if your thumbs aren't exactly green.

Although perennials are beautiful, harsh winter weather can ruin them. Don't let this happen. Hire a landscaper to spread mulch in your flower beds so the plants are well protect-

ed. With the right amount of mulch, perennials have a much higher chance of surviving the icy winter temperatures. Plus, the mulch keeps hungry critters away.

7. Clean your fireplace

There's nothing as cozy as lounging in front of a fireplace during the chilly winter season. And the good news is that as long as they're well maintained, fireplaces can be a cost-efficient heat source.

8. Seal attic air leaks

Warm air rises, so if your attic isn't well sealed and insulated, you'll likely pay more than necessary to heat your home through the winter. Old attic insulation or insulation that has been compressed or damaged by water intrusion or nuisance wildlife doesn't do its job very well.

9. Upgrade your furnace

An average natural gas furnace has a lifespan of approximately 20 years. Regular maintenance will help a furnace reach that 20-year mark, but that doesn't mean that it will operate efficiently the entire time.

Energy efficiency technology improves virtually every year, and federal efficiency standards often become more strict as a reaction. This helps our environment and ultimately saves you money. The more efficient your furnace, the less you pay for utility services.

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