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Minden Press-Herald • Bossier Press-Tribune

SPRING

Home

IMPROVEMENT

2025

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Mobile Home Tips:

Spring is an ideal time to refresh and revitalize your mobile home. Here are 10 key tips to help you with your spring home improvement:

1. Roof Inspection and Cleaning:

After winter, your roof may have sustained damage. Check for missing or damaged shingles, and clean off any debris. This is crucial for preventing leaks.

2. Skirting Check and Repair:

Inspect your mobile home's skirting for any cracks or damage. Repairing or replacing damaged skirting helps pre-

vent pests and improves insulation.

3. Window and Door Maintenance:

Check for drafts and ensure proper sealing around windows and doors. Replace any damaged weather stripping or caulk to improve energy efficiency. Clean window tracks and lubricate hinges.

4. HVAC System Tune-Up:

Before the summer heat, service your HVAC system. Change air filters, clean vents, and inspect ductwork. A well-maintained system improves air quality and saves energy.

5. Plumbing System Check:

Inspect pipes for leaks or corrosion,

especially those exposed to winter conditions. Test outdoor faucets and drain and flush your water heater.

6. Gutter Cleaning:

Clear gutters and downspouts of leaves and debris to prevent water damage. Ensure proper drainage away from your home's foundation.

7. Foundation and Leveling Inspection:

Check for signs of settling or shifting in your mobile home's foundation. Address any issues promptly to prevent structural problems.

8. Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detector Check:

Replace batteries and test all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Safety is paramount, so ensure these devices are functioning correctly.

9. Exterior Cleaning:

Wash the siding, deck, and porch to remove dirt, mold, and mildew. Pressure washing can be effective for vinyl siding.

10. Landscaping and Outdoor Refresh:

Clean up your yard, trim bushes, and add fresh mulch. Consider adding potted plants or flowers to enhance curb appeal.

By following these spring maintenance tips, you can keep your mobile home in excellent condition and enjoy a comfortable living space.

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HIRING A PAINTER

HERE IS A CHECKLIST OF A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN HIRING A PAINTER:

- ✓ Get recommendations: Ask friends, family, and neighbors for recommendations. You can also check online review sites.
- ✓ Get multiple quotes: Get quotes from at least three different painters. Be sure to get quotes in writing.
- ✓ Ask about experience: Make sure the painter has experience painting the type of surfaces you have in your home.
- ✓ Ask about insurance: Make sure the painter is insured and bonded.
- ✓ Get a contract in writing: The contract should include the scope of work, the price, and the start and completion dates.
- ✓ Get samples: Once you've narrowed down your choices, get samples of the paint and paint them on large pieces of paper. This will help you see how the color looks in different lighting conditions.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to experiment: If you're not sure what color to choose, don't be afraid to experiment. You can always repaint if you don't like the color.

ADDITIONAL TIPS:

- ✓ Be prepared to answer questions: The painter will likely have some questions about your home, such as the size of the rooms and the type of paint you want to use.
 - ✓ Be available to answer questions: The painter may have some questions about your home, such as the size of the rooms and the type of paint you want to use.
 - ✓ Be clear about your expectations: Let the painter know what you expect from them. For example, do you want them to move furniture or protect your floors?
 - ✓ Don't be afraid to ask questions: If you have any questions about the painting process, don't be afraid to ask the painter.
- By following these tips, you can hire a great painter and choose paint colors that you'll love.

PICKING PAINT COLORS:

- ✓ Consider the mood you want to create: Do you want a room to feel calm and relaxing or energetic and stimulating?
- ✓ Consider the size of the room: Dark colors can make a room feel smaller, while light colors can make a room feel larger.
- ✓ Consider the amount of natural light: If a room doesn't get a lot of natural light, you may want to choose a light color.
- ✓ Consider the furniture and other decor: The paint color should complement the furniture and other decor in the room.



Boost Your Home's Curb Appeal

Boosting your home's curb appeal can make a significant difference, whether you're planning to sell or simply want to enjoy a more attractive home. Here's a breakdown of key areas to focus on:

1. LANDSCAPING:

Lawn Care:

- A well-maintained lawn is fundamental. Regular mowing, weeding, and fertilization are essential.
- Consider edging your lawn for a clean, crisp look.

Planting:

- Add colorful flowers and plants to your flowerbeds.
- Plant shrubs and trees to add depth and dimension to your landscape.
- Use potted plants to add pops of color to your porch or entryway.
- Consider seasonal plants, to keep your yard looking vibrant year round.

Mulching:

- Mulch around plants to retain moisture and suppress weeds.
- Fresh mulch adds a polished look to your landscaping.

2. EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE:

Paint:

- A fresh coat of paint can revitalize your home's exterior.
- Pay attention to the front door, which is a focal point. A brightly colored door can make a big impact.
- Consider painting or replacing old, worn out shutters.

Cleaning:

- Power wash your siding, driveway, and walkways to remove dirt and grime.
- Clean windows to allow more natural light into your home.
- Clean out your gutters, to prevent water damage.

Roof and Gutters:

- Ensure your roof is in good repair.
- Clean and maintain your gutters.

3. ENTRYWAY ENHANCEMENT:

Front Door:

- Ensure your front door is clean

and well-maintained.

- Consider adding a new doorknob or hardware.
- A welcoming doormat can add a touch of personality.

Lighting:

- Install outdoor lighting to illuminate your entryway and walkways.

- Consider solar-powered lights for energy efficiency.

House Numbers:

- Upgrade your house numbers to a modern and stylish design.
- Ensure they are easy to see from the street.

Porch:

- If you have a porch, keep it clean and inviting.
- Add comfortable seating and decorative accents.

4. DETAILS MATTER:

Mailbox:

- Replace a worn-out mailbox with a new one.
- Consider adding flowers or plants around the base of your mailbox.

Driveway and Walkways:

- Repair any cracks or damage to your driveway and walkways.
- Keep them clean and free of debris.

Garage Door:

- Ensure your garage door is in good working order.
- Consider adding decorative hardware or a fresh coat of paint.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

CONSISTENCY:

Maintain a consistent style and color scheme throughout your exterior.

BALANCE:
Create a balanced and harmonious look with your landscaping and exterior features.

BUDGET:
Set a budget and prioritize projects based on their impact and cost.

LOCAL CLIMATE:
Choose plants and materials that are suitable for your local climate.

By focusing on these areas, you can significantly enhance your home's curb appeal and create a welcoming and attractive exterior.





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Remodeling Your Kitchen: A DEEP DIVE

Remodeling your kitchen is a big undertaking, but the rewards – a more functional, beautiful, and enjoyable space – can be immense. Here's a breakdown of key considerations:

1. PLANNING & BUDGETING:

Define Your Scope: * **Minor Refresh:** New countertops, backsplash, paint, and hardware.

Mid-Range Remodel: New cabinets, countertops, appliances, and flooring.

Full Gut Renovation: New layout, plumbing, electrical, and everything else.

Set a Budget: Kitchen remodels can vary wildly in cost. Research average costs in your area and allocate funds for:

Materials: Cabinets, countertops, appliances, flooring, backsplash, lighting.

Labor: Demolition, installation, and any specialized services.

Unexpected Costs: Always include a contingency fund for unforeseen issues.

2. DESIGN & LAYOUT:

Functionality: * “Kitchen Triangle”: Optimize the flow between the sink, stove, and refrigerator.

Storage: Maximize storage with pull-out shelves, corner solutions, and deep drawers.

Work Zones: Create dedicated areas for prep, cooking, and clean-up.

Style: * **Inspiration:** Gather images and create a mood board.

Color Palette: Choose colors that complement your style and create the desired mood.

Materials: Consider durability, maintenance, and aesthetics when selecting materials.

3. KEY COMPONENTS:

Cabinets: * **Types:** Stock, semi-custom, or custom.

Finishes: Paint, stain, or laminate.

Hardware: Knobs and pulls can significantly impact the overall look.

Countertops: * **Popular Choices:** Granite, quartz, marble, butcher block, laminate.

Consider: Durability, heat resistance, and aesthetic appeal.

Backsplash: * **Tile:** Ceramic, glass, subway, mosaic.

Other Options: Sheet metal, natural stone, or even paint.

Appliances: * **Energy Efficiency:** Choose Energy Star-rated appliances to save money.

Style: Match the style of your kitchen (modern, traditional, etc.).

4. FLOORING:

Durability: Choose a durable, water-resistant material.

Popular Options: Tile, hardwood, vinyl, laminate.

Comfort: Consider underlayment for added comfort.

5. LIGHTING:

Task Lighting: Under-cabinet lighting, pendant lights over the island.

Ambient Lighting: Recessed lighting or a chandelier.

Accent Lighting: Highlight architectural details or artwork.

6. HIRING A CONTRACTOR:

Get Recommendations: Ask for referrals from friends, family, and other trusted sources.

Interview Contractors: Get multiple quotes and compare services.

Read Reviews: Check online reviews and ratings.

Sign a Contract: Ensure a detailed

contract outlines the scope of work, timeline, and payment schedule.

7. LIVING THROUGH THE RENOVATION:

Plan Ahead: Arrange for temporary kitchen space, if needed.

Communication: Maintain open communication with your contractor throughout the project.

Cleanliness: Keep the work area as clean as possible.

Remember: A successful kitchen remodel requires careful planning, attention to detail, and a good budget. By following these tips, you can create a kitchen that is both beautiful and functional for years to come.



Advantages of Spring Patio Construction

Building a patio in the spring offers several advantages, making it a popular and often ideal time for this type of home improvement project. Here's a breakdown of why spring is a great time to build a patio:

IDEAL WEATHER CONDITIONS:

- Spring's moderate temperatures are perfect for working outdoors. They also allow materials like concrete and pavers to cure properly, which is crucial for their long-term durability.
- Longer daylight hours provide more time for construction, helping to speed up the project.
- Compared to summer, spring typically has fewer extreme weather events that can cause delays.

AVOIDING THE SUMMER RUSH:

- Contractors tend to be less busy in the early spring, making it easier to schedule your project.
- You may also find better deals on

materials and labor before the peak summer season.

OPTIMAL TIMING FOR LANDSCAPING:

- Spring is the ideal time for planting, so you can seamlessly integrate your new patio with surrounding landscaping.
- This allows plants and grass to establish themselves and flourish by



summer.

READINESS FOR SUMMER ENJOYMENT:

- Building your patio in the spring ensures it will be ready for use during the prime outdoor entertaining season.
- This allows you to maximize your enjoyment of your outdoor space throughout the summer months.

PERMIT AND PLANNING ADVANTAGES:

- Early spring can be a time where local permit offices are less busy, thus speeding up that process.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPRING PATIO BUILDING:

WEATHER AWARENESS:

- While spring weather is generally favorable, it can still be unpredictable.
- Be prepared for occasional rain and allow for potential delays.

GROUND CONDITIONS:

- Spring thaws can lead to very wet ground conditions. Ensure that the ground is sufficiently dry before starting any excavation or base preparation.
- By taking these factors into account, you can make the most of the spring season and create a beautiful and functional patio that you'll en-

SUN GARDEN

When selecting sun-loving plants and shrubs for North Louisiana, it's crucial to choose varieties that can withstand the region's hot, humid summers. Here's a breakdown of excellent options, keeping in mind the importance of full sun exposure (at least 6 hours of direct sunlight):

SUN-LOVING PLANT AND SHRUB RECOMMENDATIONS:

FLOWERING SHRUBS:

Gardenias: Especially the "Frost-proof" variety, which is known for its hardiness. These produce fragrant, white flowers.

Sasanqua Camellias: These are more sun-tolerant than the traditional Camellia japonica and offer beautiful fall and winter blooms.

Vitex: Also known as Chaste Tree, it produces beautiful spikes of purple flowers and is very heat-tolerant.

Roses: Many rose varieties thrive in full sun, providing vibrant colors and fragrances. Choose varieties

that are known to do well in hot and humid climates.

PERENNIALS:

Coneflowers: These hardy perennials offer beautiful flowers and attract pollinators.

Lantana: Known for their vibrant clusters of flowers and heat tolerance, lantanas are a great choice for sunny areas.

Salvia: These plants offer a variety of colors and attract hummingbirds. They are also very heat-tolerant.

Coreopsis: these plants provide sunny yellow flowers, and tolerate heat.

Zinnias: These are cherished for their long lasting blooms, and variety of colors.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Louisiana Super Plants: The LSU AgCenter's "Louisiana Super Plants" program is an excellent resource for finding plants that have been proven to thrive in the state's

climate.

Native Plants: Consider incorporating native plants, as they are well-adapted to the local environment and require less maintenance.

SOIL AND WATERING:

Ensure that the soil is well-drained, as many sun-loving plants are susceptible to root rot.

Provide adequate watering, espe-

cially during hot, dry periods.

KEY TIPS:

• When planting, provide ample space for plants to grow and receive sunlight.

• Mulching can help retain soil moisture and regulate soil temperature.

• Regularly deadhead flowers to encourage continuous blooming.



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