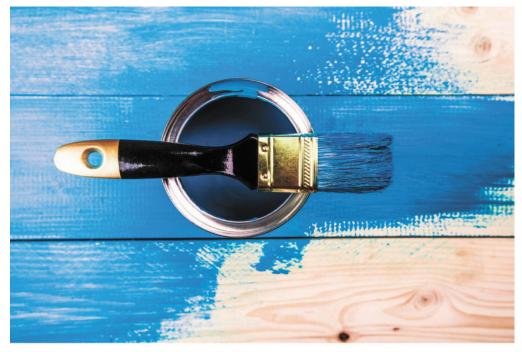
Wednesday, April 25, 2018 Spring Home Improvement

Home improvement projects ramp up when the weather warms up, as homeowners channel the rejuvenating feelings of spring and tackle their home to-do lists. Large-scale renovations can greatly affect a home, but smaller projects can yield impressive results and be completed over the course of a single weekend.

If time is of the essence, these weekend or one-day projects may satisfy homeowners' desires to fix up their homes.

- Create an accent wall. Painting a focal wall in a home can create a serious impact. The bonus is it will not take as long or require as many materials as painting an entire room. Accent walls frequently feature a bold color, so decide on placement and tackle this project in less than
- Install stair runners. Dress up hardwood stairs with decorative carpet runners. Runners come in elongated pieces of carpeting or individual pieces that can be placed on each step. If carpeting doesn't fit with the home's design, painting individual stair treads also can create visual appeal.
- Dress up the entryway. An entryway is a guest's first impression of a home. Many entryways can use a minor overhaul, both inside and outside. Paint the front door a different color so it pops from the curb. Install a new



mailbox or decorative house numbers. A new welcome mat can change the look as well. Inside, consider laying a new floor. Resilient vinyl tiles come in many different patterns and can mimic the look of wood, travertine or marble. Installing a floor can take a day or two.

- Install a new faucet. Instantly improve a kitchen or a bathroom with new fixtures. New faucets can provide aesthetic appeal and low-flow faucets can help conserve
- Create a gallery on the staircase. Gather and arrange framed photos, artwork or

wall accents so that they ascend the wall of a staircase. This creates a designer touch and can dress up an often barren area of wall space.

- Install a fresh light fixture. Improve drab spaces with a little illumination. Better Homes & Gardens suggests replacing an existing fixture with something new and vibrant. If hanging a new fixture is not within one's skill set, free-standing table or floor lamps also can cast a new glow on a space.
- Add molding. Molding can add instant aesthetic appeal to a room. Molding is appropriate near the floor, at

the top of walls where they meet the ceiling, or even midwall as a chair rail. Some homeowners like to create framed molding on walls in formal living spaces.

· Update kitchen or bathroom hardware. Replacing hardware is a fast and easy project, but one that can have immediate impact. Swap out tired or outdated hardware for newer brushed metals and more impactful shapes and designs.

renovations do Home not need to take weeks or months. Many projects can be completed over the course of a weekend.



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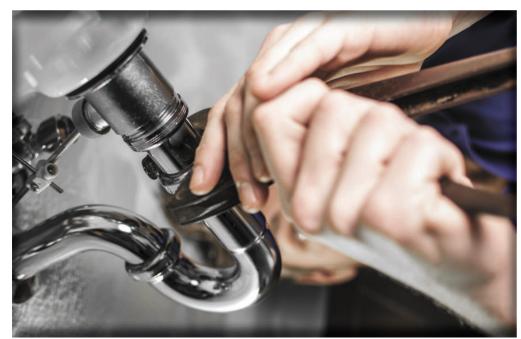


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## How to clear a clogged drain



are designed to handle heavy usage. When everything is working as it should, toilets flush, showers drain properly, and sink basins empty of water in a snap. But when a clog is present in a system, water can quickly back up.

There are various techniques to clear clogged cleared without the help of a plumber or even any tools. More significant blockages will require more elbow grease.

system.

drains. Minor clogs may be freed by pouring boiling can try to fish the clog out of hot water or a combination the drain with a wire hanger. of baking soda and vina clog is to locate the prob- pressure within the pipes, a hire a professional.

Home plumbing systems lem. Drainage issues that af- plunger can dislodge whatfect a particular sink or toilet ever is causing the backup. If may be isolated to that fix- the clog seems to be further ture. Clogs that are present down the drain, hair or grime throughout the house may be may have become trapped. indicative of a larger prob- An auger, often referred to lem in the plumbing that is as a "plumber's snake," can directing waste away from be inserted into the drain to the house and into the sewer remove the grime and free up the water flow. Homeowners Sometimes a clog can be without access to an auger

If clogs cannot be alleviegar down the drain. If that ated, drain traps may need to doesn't help, move on to a be accessed. Those who do plunger, advise the experts at not know their way around The first step to clearing This Old House. By creating pipes and wrenches should

## Did you know?

Just like certain exercises, home improvement projects may involve heavy lifting, bending, moving, and stretching. After spending much of the winter indoors and largely sedentary, some homeowners may be tempted to jump into projects with gusto when the warm weather returns. But that can be a recipe for injury that can sideline DIYers for a while. Instead, homeowners can start slowly and then gradually work longer hours, just as they might do when returning to exercise after some time off. Homeowners can see how their muscles feel after an hour or two while not concentrating on one task for too long. Homeowners who vary the tasks they tackle will use different muscle groups, which can reduce strain and limit injury risk. Whenever possible, opt for ergonomic tools that can reduce users' risk of repetitive stress inju-



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## How to create an effective workflow in the kitchen

makeovers are some of the they are placed at appropriate function best for their own inmost coveted and profitable improvements that can be made to a home. Installing new cabinetry, countertops and appliances can transform the look of a kitchen, but homeowners also must consider the functionality of design when renovating.

The National Kitchen and Bath Association suggests applying the kitchen "work triangle," which is a concept used to create efficient kitchen layouts. The triangle comprises imaginary straight lines drawn from the cooking appliance, sink and refrigerator. These are where much of the work in the kitchen takes place. The general idea is that when the work triangle is positioned accordingly - with the three components in close proximity to one another the kitchen is easier and more efficient to use. Homeowners

distances, reducing wasted dividual lifestyles. steps.

lowing these guidelines to appliances within the kitchen. create efficient kitchens.

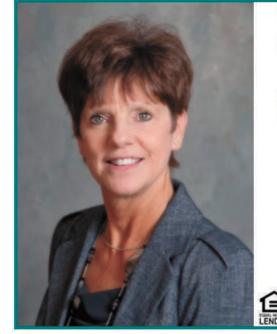
- No major traffic patterns should cross through the triangle.
- The sum of the work triangle's three sides should not exceed 26 feet. Each portion of the triangle should be between four and nine feet.
- Avoid cutting through an island or a peninsula.
- If the kitchen has only one sink, it should be placed between or across from the cooking surface, preparation area or refrigerator.

The work triangle is a suggestion, not a law of design. As kitchens evolve and more people use them simultaneously, designers may take certain liberties - even having multiple triangles at play. will be able to move freely Homeowners should also

Bathroom and kitchen among these elements when design their kitchens so they

Kitchen layout can be just The NKBA suggests fol- as important as the decor and





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