

Laundry room renovation ideas

To former apartment dwellers or those who have never enjoyed the benefit of a dedicated laundry area, even the smallest washer and dryer space can seem like a luxury.

The benefits of dedicated laundry rooms abound. However, disorganized laundry rooms can nullify such benefits. Depending on the needs and preferences of each homeowner, laundry room designs can be customized for convenience.

Employ vertical space

Floor space may be at a premium in a laundry room, especially for those who want

to devote as much space as possible to bulk-size washer and dryer units. Therefore, utilizing wall space is key. Use shelving, wire racks, hooks, and other organizational tools to store items on the wall. Shelves can be tucked into just about any space, and there are different options that can fit into corners or shallow areas. These are a great option for keeping detergent or other laundry essentials nearby.

Clean designs reduce clutter

Simple, clean designs can be an asset in a laundry room.



An organized and efficient laundry room setup can make washing and drying clothes easier.

If budget and space permits, cabinetry built into the design will help keep items out of sight in the laundry room. Cabinets hung directly above the appliances can store detergent, bleach and fabric softener. Use cabinets else-

where in the room as catchalls for cleaning supplies used in various other rooms around the house.

Incorporate a sink in the design

Some older laundry room setups have a slop sink to

drain discharged water from the washing machine. However, newer homes may have plumbing installed directly through the floor or walls. It is still a worthwhile idea to have a sink in the laundry room for rinsing out stains,

handwashing items and having a go-to sink for messier cleanup.

Utilize a tension rod

A rod installed between two cabinets or across a narrow width of space in the laundry room is a handy spot to hang shirts or pants to prevent wrinkling. Repurposing a ladder and suspending it from the ceiling also creates a spot to hang clothes.

Consider laundry room flooring

It's important to select flooring materials that will not be damaged by contact with moisture or spills. Vinyl, tile and some composite products often make good laundry room floor materials. Resilient flooring that mimics the look of hardwood may add a classy touch, and give the appearance of wood without having to worry about damage. To alleviate fatigue while spending long moments in the laundry room, invest in a memory foam mat that can be placed underfoot.

Keep lighting in mind

Lighting can be important in the laundry room. Rely on task lighting, under-cabinet strip lighting and overhead lights as needed for efficiency.

Laundry room design can maximize the space available and make it more convenient to launder and sort clothes.

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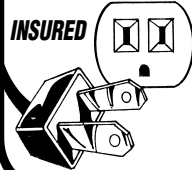
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Reduce injuries during DIY projects

Accomplishing a do-it-yourself home repair or renovation can elicit feelings of pride. DIY projects can be cost-effective and completed on homeowners' unique time schedules. Although people can do many repairs themselves, using the wrong tools or equipment, or having insufficient knowledge of the task at hand can increase the risk of injury.

The home security resource A Secure Life says that more than 18,000 Americans die every year from injuries that take place in the home. Unintentional injuries can be traced to many factors, but making repairs around the

house can contribute to accident risk. Falls, electrical shocks, broken glass, carpentry tools, and carrying overly heavy loads repeatedly result in injury, says The Home Depot.

Recognizing these potential hazards and always employing safe tactics can help keep DIYers stay healthy.

- Ladder safety: A fall from even a few feet can cause severe injuries and even death. Ladders should always be put on a level, stable surface. Individuals should not climb higher than the second rung on a step ladder or the third rung on an extension ladder.

- Tools: Every tool has the potential to cause injury. This injury risk increases when tools are not used properly. Before a tool is used, it's important to read the instructions.

- Wear protective gloves. Gloves can help protect against burns, electrocution, slippery grip, and even deep cuts or finger amputation when using sharp tools. Gloves also are essential when handling broken glass.

- Power tools: Power tools have momentum and torque behind them to make fast work of various jobs. If using power tools, DIYers should ensure they are the right tools for the job, not something that is handy or a quick fix. Power tools should only be used if a person can devote attention to the task and stay focused. That means never consuming alcohol, drugs or medica-



tions that can impair function when using power tools.

- Working with electricity: An electric shock occurs when a person is exposed to a source of electricity and the charge runs through the body. It can cause burns, cardiac arrest, changes to heartbeat, and even neurological injuries, according to the Mayo Clinic. DIYers should take precautions anytime they are working with electricity, including turning off the supply of electricity to the outlet or fixture being worked on.

- Heavy loads: It is important to exercise caution when moving around heavy loads. A friend or family member can help with the transfer of building materials or to relocate furniture.

- Distractions: Avoiding distractions is essential when doing home renovations. Keep pets and children away from work areas to focus entirely on the job at hand.

Injuries can derail home renovation projects if safety measures are ignored.

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