

Fall Home Improvement Guide

Home Services Guide

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6 Home Trends to Consider



Home design and real estate trends come and go, but once in awhile certain concepts exhibit considerable staying power. Staying abreast of what's hot and what's not can be a bit overwhelming. This list breaks down some of the trends that have made a splash and figure to be around for some time.

1. Open concept spaces: Watch the DIY Network or HGTV and you'll quickly understand that open floor plans remain highly coveted. Many modern, newly built homes have a large

multi-purpose area that blurs the borders of the kitchen, dining area and family room. These homes make it easy to entertain and keep an eye on youngsters.

2. Patterned fabrics and upholstery: Solids will always have their place in home decor, but patterned furnishings are making a name for themselves as well. Today's homeowners are not afraid to experiment with geometric and floral patterns alongside neutral colors to showcase their personalities, advises the real estate industry

resource The Lighter Side of Real Estate.

3. Farmhouse chic: Many people want the ambiance of a rustic, antique farmhouse even if they live miles away from the country. Reclaimed wood on the walls, exposed beams, eclectic accessories, and a big wood table in the dining room are hallmarks of farmhouse style. This is a fun design trend that can be personalized for cozy appeal.

4. Hidden appliances: Making appliances disappear into the

background is a growing trend. This is achieved with products that blend in with or are hidden behind cabinetry.

5. Row homes: Popularized in the 19th century and then again in the 1960s and 1980s, townhomes are making another comeback. Townhomes made up about 12.4 percent of all new construction in the single-family home market last year, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, townhomes were the most popular form of housing after single-family homes.

They have become especially popular among millennial buyers.

6. Multigenerational homes: Buyers between the ages of 53 and 62 are increasingly looking at homes that can accommodate children older than 18, with a room or apartment available to care for an aging parent, states the National Association of REALTORS®.

Home trends continue to evolve, and some trends have exhibited more staying power than others.

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Pallet Projects Can Be a Handy Hobby



In recent years, the trend of upcycling, or transforming unneeded or unwanted materials into new items or products, has become more popular. Unlike recycling, which is taking consumer materials like plastic, paper, metal, and glass and breaking them down so base materials can be remade into new, lower-quality consumer products, upcycling produces items of a higher quality than the original materials.

Wood pallet projects are an excellent example of upcycling. Such projects involve taking

wood pallets, which tend to be used to stack, move and store stock, and turning them into amazing wood products. Often free for the taking, pallet wood has become a popular building material for do-it-yourselfers. This rustic wood already has an aged look and decorative appeal. Pallets are often made from leftover wood, and using them anew is an eco-friendly endeavor that can add flair to any project. The following are just a handful of pallet project ideas.

• Christmas trees: Start thinking ahead to

the holiday season. Cut pallet planks into sizes that incrementally get larger and attach to form a triangular Christmas tree shape. Decorate with paint or other accents, and don't forget to place a star on top.

• Pallet planter: Make a planter box as big or as small as you like to grow flowers, vegetables or herbs. A narrow planter also can be hung on a wall to add flair to spaces indoors or outside.

• Swing chair: A pallet, a supportive back and some cushions can be used to make a swing that is fastened to the ceiling

of a porch or even a tree.

• Wine rack: Turn pallet wood into a wine rack that also has a space to store wine glasses below it.

• Outdoor table: Top a disused table with pallet boards nailed or screwed to the top. Stain or clear coat them, and the result is a brand new table for gardening use or outdoor entertaining.

• Platform bed: Pallets can be sanded, painted and placed to form the base of a platform bed. Utilize more pallets to serve as a headboard attached to the wall or bed frame.

• Bench: Make a pallet bench that can be

crafted child- or adult-sized. Use it inside the house or outdoors on a patio.

• Garbage container: Instead of generic plastic garbage pails, make a pallet kitchen garbage container that has rustic appeal.

• Backsplash: Give a kitchen some rustic appeal with a pallet backsplash. Cut boards into desired lengths and stagger on the wall. Leave the wood raw or seal it for protection against moisture.

Pallet wood can be transformed into many different projects, helping do-it-yourselfers stay busy at minimal cost. Go online to search for plans for building an array of pallet projects.



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Simple Ways to Improve a Kitchen Pantry

Whether starting from scratch or modifying an existing pantry, these tips can help projects go more smoothly.

People have been spending more time at home in 2020 than in years past, and certain projects around the house have become a priority. One home improvement idea that serves the double benefit of creating organization and making cooking at home more efficient is to reimagine the kitchen pantry.

A pantry is a room or closet where food, beverages and linens or dishes are stored. Pantries can be highly useful spaces that provide ancillary storage in kitchens. Many modern homes are equipped with pantries, but older homes may require some modification to create more useful pantries. Whether starting from scratch or modifying an existing pantry, these tips can help projects go more smoothly.

- Maximize vertical storage. Utilizing vertical areas can help increase storage capacity. Build in extra



nooks by investing in undershelf storage baskets. These baskets can instantly create designated areas for different types of ingredients. Homeowners also can look for ways to use the inside of cabinet doors or add extra shelves on walls or in eaves.

- Consider your needs. Figure out which items you

would like to store in the pantry and then shop for corresponding storage systems. For example, storage solutions may feature wine bottle racks, baskets for potatoes and other produce, shelving for small appliances, and even pull out racks for baking pans or cutting boards.

- Use clear storage. Put ingredients

in clear, airtight containers of similar dimensions so that you can easily find items you need. Transfer bulky items, like cereals and baking supplies, to storage containers for uniformity.

- Store bulk items elsewhere. Bulk shopping can be cost-efficient, but bulk items can quickly eat up real estate in the

pantry. Designate another area for non-perishable bulk products, like paper goods or canned items, such as in a garage or utility room.

- Pull out drawers are convenient. Pull-out drawers can reduce the need to seek and reach for items. These drawers conveniently roll out so items in the back can be accessed without disturbing foods in the front. Drawers can be custom built for any pantry space.

- Make it accessible. Think about who will be taking items from the pantry. Put children's snacks on the bottom pantry shelf where they can reach them, and then organize other shelves for adults in the home.

A pantry remodel can add valuable storage space and make one of the busiest rooms in the house operate more efficiently.

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How to Prevent Crabgrass

Few things can give a home exterior that sought after wow factor as well as a nicely maintained lawn. A lush green landscape is a great way to show pride in home ownership and improve curb appeal.

As many homeowners know, lawns are under constant attack. The elements are rarely easy on lawns, and watchful eyes must always be kept open for other problems that can plague a lawn, including crabgrass.

Crabgrass can be a formidable adversary in the summer months. Crabgrass begins as seeds. These seeds germinate in spring or early summer. While crabgrass dies after the first hard frost in fall, crabgrass seeds remain dormant in winter, and the seeds then grow again in the following spring when ground temperature warms up. Without action to prevent crabgrass seeds from germinating, homeowners will likely end up with patches of crabgrass throughout their lawns every summer.

Your local lawn and garden specialists at Guthals Nursery note that a healthy lawn is the best defense against crabgrass. The healthier a lawn is, the harder it is for unwanted grasses like crabgrass to thrive. The following are a handful of strategies that can promote a healthy lawn and make it more difficult for unsightly crabgrass to establish itself in the months ahead.

- Keep grass at a consistent length, and don't cut too low. "Maintaining a consistent length of grass by mowing and fertilizing at regular intervals can make it hard for crabgrass to thrive", says Charlton Guthals. Crabgrass requires ample sunlight to germinate, so grass that is not cut too short may keep crabgrass from growing in. Of course, grass should not be allowed to grow knee-length, either. By raising blades to the mowing height appropriate for their type of grass, and mowing at regular



"Maintaining a consistent length of grass by mowing and fertilizing at regular intervals can make it hard for crabgrass to thrive" - Charlton Guthals

intervals so the grass remains at that height through the summer, homeowners can promote healthy lawns and make it harder for crabgrass to germinate.

- Never cut too much of the blade off of the grass. When mowing, don't cut too much of the blade off the grass with each cut, even if the grass seems especially long. As noted, cutting too low allows sunlight

to reach crabgrass seeds. But cutting too much off the blade, even if the grass is still high after a mow, can injure the grass. Injured grass can make lawns more vulnerable to weeds and crabgrass.

- Apply a pre-emergence herbicide. Pre-emergence herbicides kill germinating grass seedlings before they emerge from the soil. Follow

the manufacturer's instructions regarding when and how much herbicide to apply. Using a pre-emergent in the fall helps stop winter weeds from growing. You should also use a post-emergent herbicide that will kill grassy weeds as they grow.

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