



FALL HOME IMPROVEMENT



INJURY

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- Wear appropriate eye protection when particles of any kind are falling, flying or moving through the air.
 - Keep tools in good condition so they do not kick up unnecessary debris or cause injuries.
 - Always use chemical safety goggles when handling hazardous solvents and detergents.
 - Read and follow all instructions and warnings on manufacturer labels.
 - Understand that regular eyeglasses do not provide adequate protection.
 - Keep kids away from flying toys or any that use projectiles.
 - Never mix chemicals, as mixed chemicals can damage your eyes and cause additional injuries.
 - Wear adequate eye protection to prevent overexposure to UV rays when outside. Sunglasses that guard against UV-A and UV-B rays are recommended.
 - Keep dangerous household products, like detergents, paints, glues, and solvents, stored out of reach or behind locked doors.
 - Exercise caution with everyday items or tools. For example, do not run with pointy items in hand.
 - Store loose belongings in the trunk of a car or cargo bed, as loose objects can become projectiles in an automobile accident.
- Protecting your eyesight should be a priority, and it's important to exercise caution at work, at home or during play to protect you and your children's eyes from injury.

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Did You Know...

Smartphones can make the home improvement process that much easier. Various smartphone apps now exist, and many were designed with the intention of making it easier to plan and execute home improvement projects. Some apps allow smartphone users to more easily match the colors of their furnishings with certain accents and accessories, saving homeowners the time spent wondering if certain items will match or clash with their existing furnishings. Homeowners can even make use of apps that make it easier for them to see how new furniture will fit in their existing spaces.

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Tips for revitalizing paneled rooms

Paneling is a low-cost way to cover problem walls. In the 1960s and 1970s, paneling was very popular. Sold in large panels, paneling was relatively easy to hang, and quickly became a staple of dens and finished basements.

But few of today's homeowners are enamored with the look of faux wood paneling.

Those who purchase homes that have paneling on the walls often search for ways to transform the look of rooms in which the walls are covered in paneling. While paneling does go up quickly, removing it may not be as simple. Explore these options for giving paneled walls a new look.

Paint over the paneling

The fastest way to breathe new life into a paneled room is to paint over the paneling.

The texture of the paneling will show from beneath, giving the room appeal without the dark hue of the wood or veneer panels. Consult with a paint store or home improvement center to determine the most effective way to cover up paneling with paint.

Sometimes it is wise to lightly scuff the paneling with a fine-grit sandpaper so that the paint will adhere. Shiny or glossed paneling can be dulled with a deglossing product. Sometimes a combination of a thick primer and color will grip the paneling and reduce the number of coats

needed to cover it.

Also, invest in a high-quality, professional-grade paint. It may cost a bit more, but such paint will be well worth it when it glides over the paneling, covering it completely. If you don't want the grooves showing between the panels, fill them in with spackle and sand down to create a smooth surface before painting.

Cover the paneling

Covering up the paneling is another tactic. Rather than coating the wall in paint, consider a wall-paper liner. Liners are essentially a thick, plain wallpaper that is applied on top of the paneling or used when dealing with damaged walls. In lieu of tearing down the walls and putting up new dry-wall, the liner will cover imperfections. Many of these products can be painted directly and may not require priming beforehand.

This can be great for homeowners whose goal is to cover paneling quickly and easily.

Those who prefer a patterned look on the walls can opt to cover paneling with a printed wallpaper.

However, depending on the thickness of the wallpaper, this may be a two-step process.

You may need to fill in the creases between the panels first, or first use a thick wallpaper liner to create a seamless surface.

Cut the paneling

If you desire a cottage

or country look in a room, remove half of the paneling, leaving the bottom portion intact.

Then place molding or a chair rail where you made your cut, creating a wainscoting effect. The top portion of the wall can be painted, while the bottom portion can be left as the wood color or painted a complementary color.

Remove the paneling

The most labor-intensive way to give a paneled room a new look is to remove the paneling.

Pry at a portion of the paneling in an inconspicuous spot in the room to determine which method was used to install the paneling. Some people only tack it into place with small, finishing nails, while others glue the paneling to the wall for a secure installation.

Glue will be much more difficult to remove and could further damage the walls and paneling in the process.

If the paneling is too difficult to remove, covering or painting it may be a smarter option. Small nails can be removed by pulling at the panels.

Spackle holes before painting over the walls.

Paneling is an inexpensive decorating option that was first popularized 40 years ago.

Though less popular now, paneling still shows up in homes and can be remedied with some relatively easy tips.

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How to stay within your budget

Home improvement projects range from small scale undertakings that can be tackled in a single weekend to large remodels that can take several months to complete. While no two projects are the same, every home improvement project demands that homeowners dip into their pockets and spend some money.

Much like the scale of projects varies greatly, so, too, do the financial commitments required of homeowners to make those projects a reality. But no matter the size of the project, homeowners can find ways to stretch their budgets without sacrificing the quality of their improvements.

* Do your homework

Before you decide to make changes to your home, it's best to first do some research into any potential projects you're considering.

Many homeowners have decided to dive into a project before they fully realize its scope and cost, and going in blind can bust a budget, turning what might have seemed like a relatively simple project into a money pit.

Understanding just what a project entails and how much it's likely to cost can give homeowners an idea of what they can afford and where they might be able to stretch their budgets.

For example, if you want to replace your kitchen countertops but can't afford engineered quartz countertops, you might be able to find a less expensive alternative, such as tile, that you like just as much. But it's best to research such alternatives before you decide to replace your existing countertops. If you can't find a less expensive alternative, you might want to postpone the project until you can grow your budget. But starting the project without first grasping its true cost is a recipe for disaster, so do your homework before you find your toolbox and start working.

* Build unforeseen expenses into your budget

Another way to stay within your budget is to include budget-busting unforeseen expenses into the budget from the get-go.

Whether you're doing the project yourself or paying a contractor, nearly every home improvement project will present some unforeseen, and costly, hurdles.

For example, you might find mold inside the walls when you're converting a basement, and it can cost a pretty penny to make that mold go away.

If you go into the project expecting such hurdles, then the financial sting of addressing them won't prove too great a burden.

But if the mold catches you and your budget

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