

Home Improvement How-Tos At Any Level

(NAPSA)—Whether you're a new homeowner looking to put your own stamp on the place or a DIY pro looking for your next project idea, home improvement can be a challenge. No matter what project you want to tackle, getting the right tips and tools is the first step to success.

"I may be a do-it-yourself pro now, but even I had to start somewhere," says Steve Watson, home improvement expert and host of HGTV's "Don't Sweat It." "All projects can be tailored for the skill level of the do-it-yourselfer—all you need is the right advice, dependable products and an expert resource."

To help first-time homeowners and DIY all-stars alike, True Value provides the expert know-how and tools to complete a project from start to finish with ease.

Following are some of Steve's favorite weekend home improvement projects for any skill level, plus the tips to get them done right:

Spice Up Your Kitchen

- **Project Idea:** The kitchen can be one of the most inviting rooms in the house; however, if the space is outdated, there are many projects you can do in just a weekend to add excitement to the space.

- **Get Started:** A fresh coat of paint can revitalize boring cabinets without having to replace them. Remember not to prime or paint the doors while they're closed to prevent sticking.

- **Take it up a Notch:** Create a decorative statement with a new tile backsplash. Make sure to buy extra tile in case you need to replace them later. Also, work in 2

ft. x 2 ft. square areas to prevent the adhesive from drying.

Paint Like a Pro

- **Project Idea:** One of the quickest and easiest ways to change up the look of any room is with paint.

- **Get Started:** For a crash course in painting 101, start with the ceiling first and move on to the walls. Prime and then apply the first coat of paint in 6-ft. square sections, using a zigzag pattern of overlapping "W" strokes.

- **Take it up a Notch:** Use custom finishes and designs (such as striping, diamonds and color blocking) to add visual interest. Measure and map out your design with painter's tape and experiment with color.

Go Green with a Green Thumb

- **Project Idea:** Make a great first impression by sprucing up your yard.

- **Get Started:** Show off your landscaping by setting up energy-efficient accent lighting. Whether positioned around a garden or to light a path, exterior lighting is a simple way to put the focus back on your yard.

- **Take it up a Notch:** Building a compost bin with simple chicken wire and wood or metal stakes can keep your yard "green" by preventing plant diseases, reducing the need for fertilizer and revitalizing soil. Collect waste such as grass clippings, fruit/vegetable scraps, eggshells, dry leaves and shredded newspapers, and then allow the compost to break down for up to two to three months.

Visit www.StartRightStartHere.com for complete step-by-

step instructions for these and other project ideas, along with customizable shopping lists and quick tips.

Year-Round Project Ideas

To keep your home looking and feeling like new, check out www.StartRightStartHere.com and the tailored project approaches below to prepare you for any season.

Fall

- **Beginner:** Freshen up your bathroom with a new coat of paint and replace old hardware.
- **Experienced:** Install a new bathroom vanity for a whole new look.

Winter

- **Beginner:** Eliminate air leaks by weather stripping or applying plastic sheeting over your windows.
- **Experienced:** Insulate basement walls to minimize heat loss and lower heating bills.

Spring

- **Beginner:** Enhance your entryway with updated address numbers, door accessories or decorative lighting.
- **Experienced:** Build a new concrete walkway that looks just like brick or cobblestone.

Summer

- **Beginner:** Installing a ceiling fan is a breeze and will help regulate home temperature.
- **Experienced:** Put in an attic ventilator fan to lengthen roof life and cut cooling costs.

