

Home Improvement Resolutions for the New Year

From Dennis Goebel, Vice President, Liberty Mutual Insurance



Improving things around your home can make your whole year happier and more comfortable. Here are a few do-it-yourself ideas to get your New Year's resolution list started.

Focus on one room. Resolve to fix up just one room this year and give it your total attention. It can be as easy as replacing one old piece of furniture or hanging up some new artwork. Even tackling small home maintenance projects like cleaning out one drawer or cabinet each weekend will add up to a feeling of accomplishment.

Become more energy efficient with a programmable thermostat. Installing a programmable thermostat will help you save money. Program it to automatically lower your house temperature by 5 to 10 degrees while you're out, and again at night when you're sleeping.

Change your window treatments seasonally. Switch your window treatments to heavier drapes during colder weather to provide insulation and energy efficiency. Use sheer or lightweight curtains when the weather is warmer to give the room a lighter feel and allow more airflow.

Adorn your home with plants. Houseplants can absorb toxic substances in the air and release oxygen, helping to purify your home. NASA has even studied house plants as a means of purifying the air in space stations.

Commit to greening your home. Take a walk around your house and survey for opportunities to "green" your space. Switch to energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights (CFL) bulbs, look for areas that are drafty and add installation or weather stripping, and set up a recycling station in your garage to help reduce waste. These small updates can add up to energy savings in the long run, too.

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