

# Weatherization Hyths - Debunkett

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(StatePoint) Weatherizing your home for each season can make it more comfortable – but how to do it can be confusing. Here are four common weatherizing myths – busted! – to help get your home ready for cooler weather to come.

Myth 1: It doesn't matter where your thermostat is placed.

**Truth:** Location, location, location! You may be spending more on heating and cooling



than you need to be if your thermostat is in the wrong place. Placed in direct sunlight, you run the risk of getting false readings, as it can "think" the room is warmer than it actually feels, causing your air conditioner to turn on when it isn't needed. Similarly, a thermostat placed near the kitchen often reads that the home is far warmer than it truly is due to the stove and oven. The best location is on an interior wall, centrally located and near areas where you spend the most time, en-

suring these rooms are the most comfortable.

Myth 2: Closed curtains and blinds in cold weather prevent heat escape.

**Truth:** According to the Department of Energy, shades and drapes

can reduce heat loss from a warm room by up to 10 percent. However, opening curtains and blinds during the day when direct sunlight hits can also allow for a warming effect. In winter, draperies should be closed at dusk but opened at dawn.

In addition, heat escape through windows can be prevented with window insulation products such as Duck brand Roll-On Window Kits, which create a barrier between outdoor air and a home's interior, helping block







drafts and air leaks. And, it's also a myth that these are hard to install: A pre-taped edge makes for easy roll-on application, requiring no measuring, while fitting snuggly to indoor window frames to provide an airtight, crystal-clear seal.

#### Myth 3: It's expensive to draftproof your home.

Truth: Homeowners can actually save hundreds of dollars annually on heating and cooling costs with proper weatherization early in the season. How do you do it? There are many inexpensive, doit-yourself weatherization products that are easy on the wallet and easy to install, requiring minimal -- if any -- tools.

are the two largest draft sources in any home and should be top priorities

for homeowners. Duck brand MAX Strength Silicone Weatherstrip Seals are quick to install and seal various size gaps around windows and doors that may be allowing air to escape.

Myth 4: It's cheaper to keep your home at a constant temperature.

**Truth:** A common misconception is that it's better to keep your home at a constant temperature, even when you're not home. However, if the system runs less during the day, it uses less energy. According to Energy.gov, you can save as much as 10 percent a year on heating and cooling by turning your thermostat back 7-10 degrees from its normal setting Windows and doors for eight hours a day. You could use the time you are at work and set the temperature back

to normal when you return in the evening.

For additional tips, text "Weather" to 84444 to access Duck brand's Project Selector, an online resource for project guides, and more, or visit DuckBrand.com. Don't let common myths scare you. Weatherizing can be an affordable, easy do-it-yourself project -- especially if you plan ahead.





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# Fabulous Fall Flavors: Why Autumn is ideal for gardening, plus timely tips for success

(BPT) - For any gardener, fall is bittersweet. The exuberance of summer's bounty has started to fade, while cooler nights and less daylight signal the approach of cold, dark winter.

However, there's still plenty of time to savor some of

the garden's best flavors before you close your door on the season. In fact, now is the perfect time to plant what are collectively known as "cool weather" crops tasty favorites that thrive in autumn's chill.

**Bonnie Plants** grows a wide variety of cool-weather veggies and herbs, perfect for fall planting. Availability of Bonnie's fall varieties is limited to specific regions, so check your local garden retailers to find plants near you.

Select some hardy favorites to get weeks of crisp

cabbage slaws, healthy kale bowls, crunchy cauliflower and broccoli or even hearty greens like collards or Swiss chard, perfect to pop in a long-simmering winter braise.

Other fall favorites include Brussels sprouts - delicious roasted with slivers of garlic, olive oil and a touch of balsamic vinegar — or any of the versatile salad greens like lettuce and spinach or flavorful herbs like cilantro that

tend to suffer and bolt prematurely in sweltering summer

Here's six timely tips from Bonnie Plants to help you make your fall garden as enjoyable as your summer harvest.

#### 1. GO BIG AT **HOME**

Plant pre-started vegetable or herb transplants rather than seeds to squeeze every last moment out of fall's compressed growing season.

These plants love warm soil coupled with cool air and will start to grow quickly. Using transplants instead of seed also means you'll be gathering tasty produce weeks earlier than you would with seed-sown varieties.

#### 2. STRETCH THE **SEASON**

While you can certainly plant coolseason veggies and herbs in pots or in the ground, a simple, commonly available garden

product, a "coldframe", can help you extend your fall season by providing some added protection. A cold frame is a foursided, clear box - open to the soil at the bottom with a hinged lid. Because the ground inside stays warmer than the ambient air temperature, a cold frame protects plants long after unsheltered veggies start to fail. (On warm, sunny days, be sure to crack the lid open to prevent too much heat from building up inside.)



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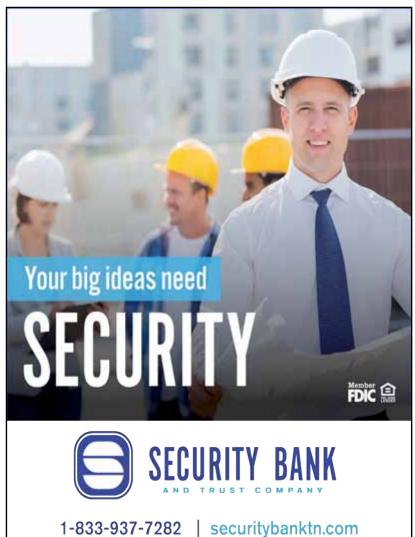
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3. PREPARE YOUR PLOT OR POT

If planting inground, be sure to clear the area of previous planted crops and weeds, as they may decay and harbor bacteria. Always bag, tie and discard debris. Turn up the soil's top layer and add some bagged compost, and mulch. If planting in a pot, be sure to sanitize pots and use fresh, new potting soil,

specifically formulated for containers.

#### 4. PROACTIVELY PATROL FOR PESTS

While pest numbers naturally decline in the cooler days of fall, they don't disappear entirely. Common pests of cool-season plants include tiny, sap-sucking aphids, caterpillars (particularly from cabbage white butterflies) and harle-

quin bugs. Inspect your plants for tiny clusters of aphids or tell-tale holes in the leaves. Handpick caterpillars or harlequin bugs from plants and dispose of them or use a strong blast of water from a hose to dislodge aphids.

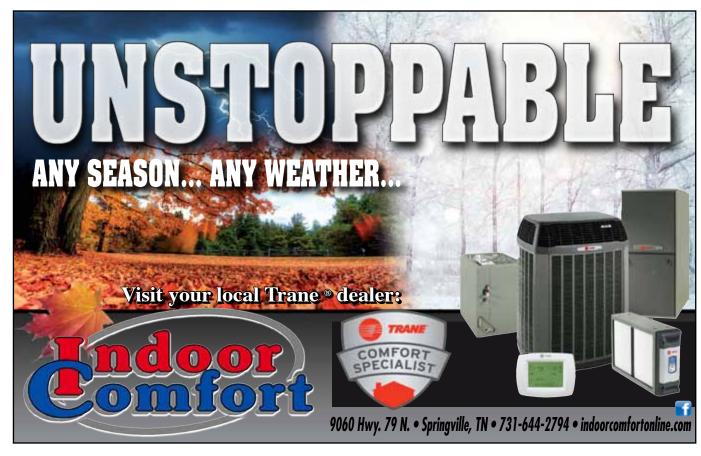
#### 5. EMBRACE COOLER, CARE-FREE COM-FORTS

With the warm days and cool nights of fall, less moisture evaporates from your garden or pots, so you'll need to water less often. (Only water when the soil 2" deep is dry.) In addition, many cool weather crops handily survive light frosts, growing well until a very hard freeze ends their productivity. Better yet, chilly weather improves the flavor of many late-season varieties, including members of the cabbage family, kale, Brussels sprouts and chard, by turning their starches into natural sugars, making them a sweet and healthy treat.

## 6. TAKE TIME TO RELAX

Just like plants, gardeners enjoy a break from the stifling heat of summer. With the leisure of cool days, fewer chores and less weeding as the garden begins to wind down, you'll be able to enjoy the garden more while you wait to harvest your fall favorites to boost your recipes and brighten your table.

If you don't want to give up on your garden's bounty, pick up a selection of cool-season favorites from Bonnie Plants now — and keep your garden growing! For more information on fall gardening and varieties, please visit www. bonnieplants.com.



# STIPS (INCLUDING VIRTUAL REALITY) FOR AVOIDING HOME IMPROVEMENT BLUNDERS



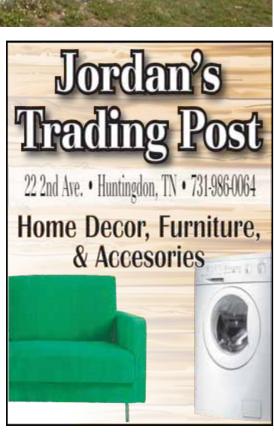
(NewsUSA) -Sponsored by GAF - Want proof of how carefully you need to weigh the alternatives before making upgrades to your home?

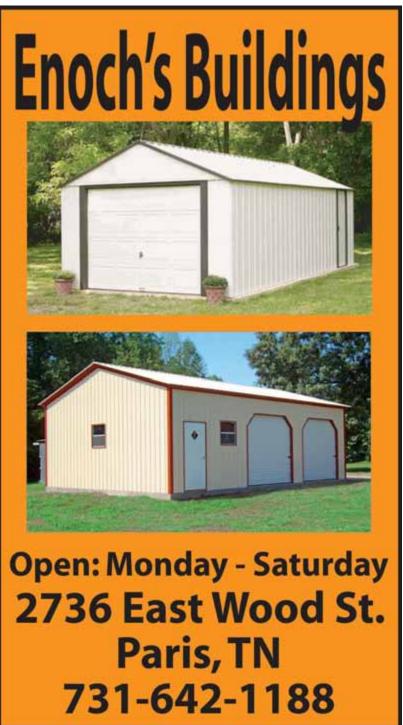
Look no further than the Florida couple who last year decided to have their house painted to look like artist Vincent Van Gogh's famous canvas "The Starry Night". It wasn't just that it was such an odd choice for an exterior that it attracted tourists - sort of the local answer to New York's Madame Tussauds - it was that the city of Mount Dora took them to court over it.

"Graffiti," the city called it. "First Amendment!" countered homeowner Lubek
Jastrzebski, an
immigrant from
Communist-era
Poland, who argued that the city
code didn't address
house colors and
aesthetics.

Yes, that's an extreme example of unintended consequences. But even though legally the homeowners wound up off the hook, anyone now contemplating shelling out significant bucks on home improvements should read on for some tips on avoiding costly missteps.

\* Don't paint your house brown either. Since most people have it in the back of their minds that they'll eventually want to attract buyers other than those obsessed with







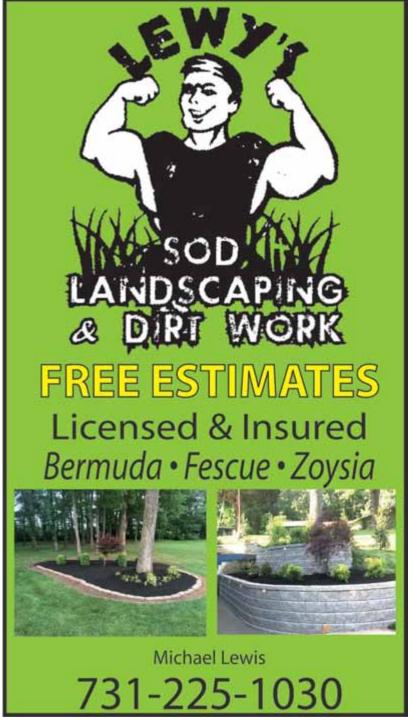
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friend. It was two years ago that a noted design guru had this to say to the New York Times about online virtual reality, augmented reality, and 3D rendering tools: "It's definitely the wave of the future, because it allows the general population to make design decisions without feeling hesitant or insecure," said Khoi Vo, a profes-

sor and the chair of the department of interior design at Savannah College of Art and Design.

Well, the future is undoubtedly here, with programs like Room Sketcher even allowing you to play architect by creating your own floor plan, furnishing the space, and then visualizing your work in 3D. But say what



you're interested in is boosting your home's all-important curb appeal with a roof upgrade. The Virtual Home Remodeler from GAF (gaf. com), North America's largest roofing manufacturer, lets you experiment with different looks by first either downloading a photo of your own home or choosing from among the many styles - everything from Victorian to ranch to French country pictured on the website.

"It's an easy way to see what would look best with your home," said Paul Dellanno, assistant marketing manager at GAF. "Because what may work for a ranch-style house may not work for a Tudor."

Once you've picked a house style, the process continues. Do you prefer the Antique Slate color shingles from the company's Camelot Shingle line you clicked on, for example, or the Golden Prairie color ones from the Glenwood Shingle line?

And the house trim and exterior walls? White or something more daring? As Dellano explained, "you can even check how the result looks at different times of day and seasons."

\* Be wary of fads.

"It looked like
Darth Vader had
moved in." is how
a writer for Realty.com described
the latest trend of
painting houses
black in her Brooklyn, New York,
neighborhood.

Word to the wise: The classics are classic for a reason.







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products we sell. We are happy to work with you every step of the way, from planning to completion.













(NewsUSA) -Sponsored by GAF - There's no need to risk breaking your neck this autumn when you've got a perfectly good attic.

Meaning what? Well, as any responsible homeowner surely knows, this is one of the two times each year when you're supposed to check the health of your roof. (Among other reasons, because it's key to a home's energy efficiency.) But who wants to be climbing a ladder 25 feet or so into the sky when the weather is turning sharply colder and nastier?

That's where your attic comes in.

According to Jason Joplin, program manager of the Center for the Advancement of Roofing Excellence, that space you're probably using mainly for storage can substitute, as a fallback, for the eyeball roof check normally recommended to be done every pre-winter and spring.

"Roofs actually create an insulated barrier that helps trap heat inside, and most attic spaces are located right below them," says Joplin. "That makes them per-

fect for spotting potential problem areas and damage without worrying about falling off a ladder."

Here's what to look for while you're up there:

- \* Water leaks. As sure as tweeting at 3 AM is generally a bad idea, it will soon storm. And when it does, shine a flashlight up in the attic to check not only for dripping water and condensation, but also for water stains on the ceiling, walls and floors. All signal that H2O is finding its way beneath your roof's shingles or behind its flashings.
- \* Ventilation. "Think of the attic as the lungs of the house," advises Joplin. "It has to be able to breathe in order to function properly." Which is to say, vents stuffed with debris need to be cleared.
- \* Animal damage. You know those "If you see something, say something" homeland security ads? Well, to avoid the havoc refugeseeking birds,

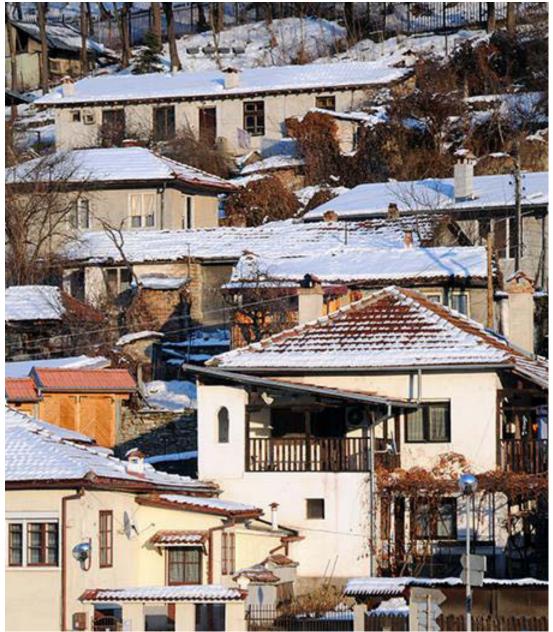
bats, squirrels and raccoons can create, warning bells should likewise sound -- followed by a call to a pestcontrol pro -- if you spot any of these telltale signs: nests, droppings and gnawed wood, wires or insulations.

\* Structural problems. The mere hint of a sagging roof -- look up for this one -- could indicate potential structural weakness requiring professional repair.

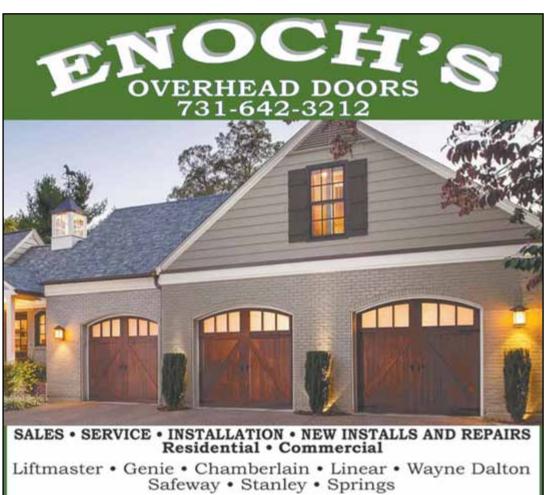
And if prolonging your roof's life is your goal, experts say it pays to consult a professional roofing contractor who's insured and uses quality materials such as the latest triple-layer line of Glenwood Shingles -- the thickest of its kind, with an authentic wood-shake look -from GAF, North America's largest roofing manufacturer. A free service that makes it easy to find a factorycertified contractor in your area can be found at gaf.com.











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# IS IT TIME TO REPLACE YOUR ENTRY DOORS WHAT TO KNOW

(StatePoint) Is it time to replace your home's entry door? If your foyer is drafty, the answer is yes. Particularly with winter around the corner. Not only will a new door boost exterior appeal, it will prepare interiors for a temperature dip, making your home more comfortable, while saving you money on utility bills.

So, what should you be looking for in a door?

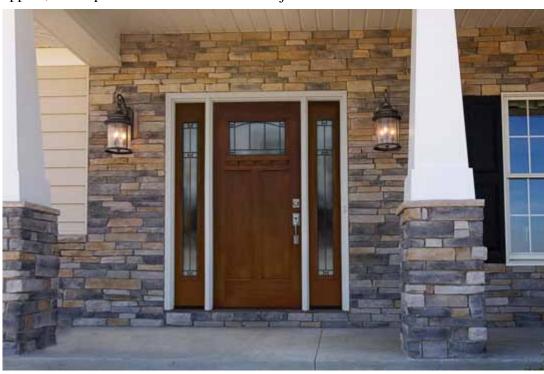
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eryone's measurements. Similarly, off-the-rack doors fall short of expectations in the same way. The materials and workmanship that go into custom-made doors are of exceptional quality and durability, and far exceed what is available as ready-made. Unlike consumer-grade doors, which are cut down to fit your need, professionalclass doors are built to your exact measurements for a more secure and

fied to meet strict energy-efficiency standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency. While a new door does come with a price tag, it's important to keep in mind that the right choice can help you lower your utility bills and ultimately present a return on your investment.

## • QUALITY MATERIALS.

While wood doors offer a beautiful classic look, they

require regular maintenance and lack the endurance, security and energy efficiency of fiberglass or steel. Consider opting for quality materials that will last a long time but not force you to sacrifice the look you want. For example, the low-maintenance fiberglass options offered by door system manufacturer ProVia include the Signet and Heritage collections and provide the classic look of real woodgrain, but are

engineered to be highly energy efficient. The Legacy steel collection provides durability and energy efficiency, whether you opt for a woodgrain texture or smooth steel look, and is a good choice if security is your top priority.

• THE RIGHT STYLE. When selecting a style and color, take into consideration the

an image of your home's exterior and play with various combinations to determine the right fit. Keep in mind that an entry door can either be a place to maintain the overall mood of your home's exterior or a way to add a pop of color.

For more tips and resources, visit provia.com. This fall, set yourself up for a comfortable winter. Upgrade your entry door for substantial energy savings and a more secure home.







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# 5 Ways to Get Your Home Ready for the Season



(StatePoint) A change in seasons often means it's time to make home decorating updates, entertain friends and family, take stock of essentials and more. Want to make all of this happen affordably?

To help, the discount experts at Dollar General are offering some essential shopping tips to save time and money while finding the items you need to live it up in style this season and beyond.

#### Refresh Your Home

Refresh home décor on a budget any time of the year. Explore your creative side as you pick out new curtains, throws, pillows, wall art cessful shindig can quickly add up, whether you're hosting the party or planning to attend one. To be the hostess with the mostest, select thematic items that color coordinate, or find seasonal options





and more. To avoid getting overwhelmed, you may want to start out by updating spaces one at a time, rather than giving your whole home a complete overhaul all at once. Shop at a discount retailer to find the perfect decorating solution for your style and budget, in an easy and convenient way.

#### Get Party-Ready

The items needed to pull off a suc-

to complement your party essentials, like balloons, plates, party favors, disposable table cloths, napkins, silverware and more. A discount retailer such as Dollar General can serve as an affordable one-stop shop for finding all of these items and is also a good destination for those in need of gift items for birthday celebrations or other special occasions. Find gift cards, candles, home gifts, accessories, toys and



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cards for recipients of all ages.

#### Stock up on Seasonal Décor

Make every holiday unforgettable and keep your spaces look bright and festive by updating your home and work station with fun and inexpensive décor every season.

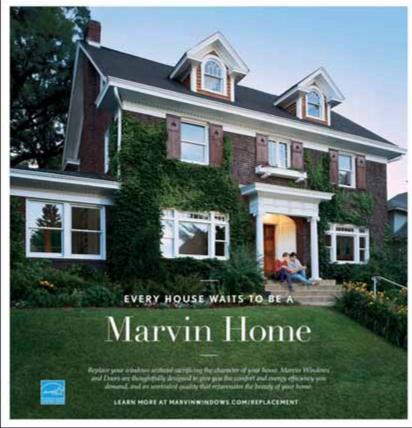
## Everyday Essentials

Instead of buying everyday items

as-needed at an expensive shop, save both time and money by stocking up on these supplies at a discount retail store. At home, be organized and have a handle on where you store items, so you can grab them as you need them.

#### **Save More**

From your favorite snacks to cleaning products and more, private brands are a great option when looking to save on quality products.



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at checkout during their next visit.

Whether you're looking to update your home décor or you're searching for affordable party supplies for an upcoming gathering, free up some space in your budget and your schedule by one-stop shopping at a discount retailer.







