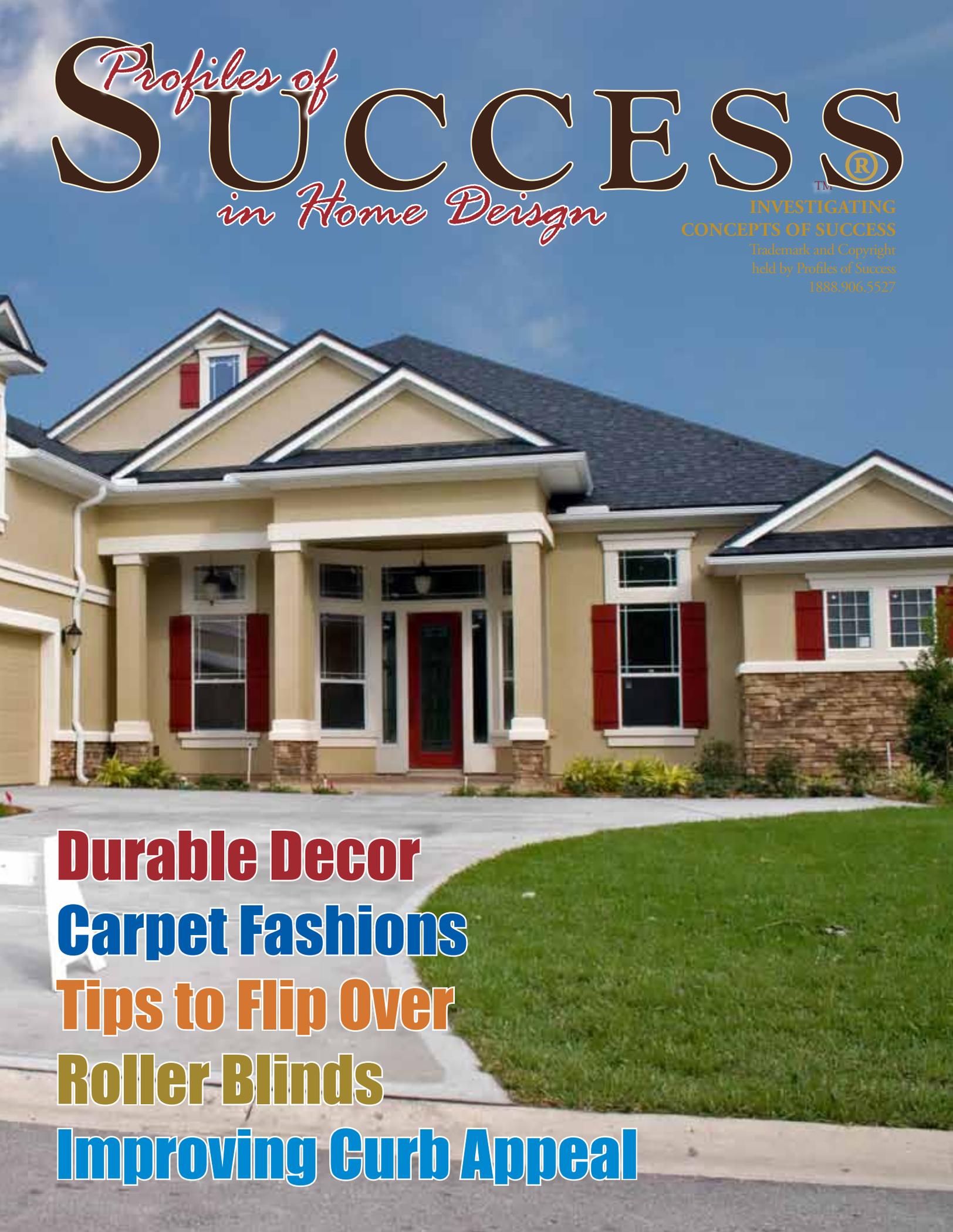


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Durable Decor
Carpet Fashions
Tips to Flip Over
Roller Blinds
Improving Curb Appeal

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Five Quick Fixes That Improve Curb Appeal for Under \$500

It's a known fact: Good-looking, well-maintained homes sell faster (and command a higher price) than houses that appear worn down and tired. In today's attractive roller coaster real-estate market enhancing curb appeal -- the first impression of a house as seen from the street -- can mean the difference between attracting serious buyers and resulting in a sale, or having the property languish for months as unsold. "Adding curb appeal is a quick and easy way to liven up the home's exterior and improve the value of the home," says Leslie Segrete, home improvement expert and television personality of The Learning Channel's (TLC) Trading Spaces and While You Were Out. Segrete offers the following tips for under \$500:

Tip # 1: Refresh Exterior Wood

One of the most significant curb-appeal improvements homeowners can make is to refresh all exterior wood surfaces. Check wood siding, trim, doors, mailboxes, decks and fences for fading, dirt and peeling paint. If the wood is unfinished, use a wood cleaner; if it's finished, use a wood stripping solution. Next, add a fresh coat of stain so these wood surfaces look clean and new again. Consider adding color to outdoor wood furniture with an exterior wood stain; it's an inexpensive way to "decorate" outdoors. The Flood Company's CWF-UV5 Designer Colors Premium Wood Finish is available in eight sheer tones, including colors like Spring Moss and Grapevine Grey. This premium exterior wood finish is also ideal for wood decks, siding and fences because it's guaranteed to protect against water damage, peeling, blistering and graying of the surface due to ultraviolet exposure. The Flood Company also offers a line of wood cleaning and prep products.

Tip # 2: Prune Foliage and Shrubs, Add Mulch

Trim shrubs and trees, and manicure the lawn. Consider energizing the landscape by planting fresh flowers -- simply adding \$100 in brightly colored annuals will instantly improve the total appearance of the yard. Take time to prune dead branches,

trim back overgrown shrubbery and spread mulch or bark around trees, shrubs and flowers for a weed-free, well-kept look. Also, small shrubs are great for concealing unattractive aspects of a home's exterior, including unappealing air-conditioning units.

Tip # 3: Freshen Up Windows, Shutters and Gutters

Clean windows that flank the front door and repair broken windows and torn screens. Repair and clean shutters to complement the revitalized front entrance, and remember to clean surrounding gutters as they can instantly ruin a first impression.

Tip #4: Lighten Up

To add warmth and add interest, consider installing exterior lighting fixtures to shed some light on a favorite tree, or illuminate the walkway. Remember to clean existing light fixtures and replace burnt-out bulbs.

Tip #5: Accessorize

A small number of accessories adds charm, especially at the home's entryway. Consider adding a few understated ornaments like burgeoning flowerpots, a colorful welcome mat, a name plate or a small rocking chair to make the space look "homey" and welcome. These small additions will attract homebuyers who can envision themselves in the lovely space.

Quick, easy and inexpensive, these five tips will infuse instant energy and appeal into any home's exterior. For printable guides on exterior home maintenance and additional tips, visit www.flood.com or call (800) 321-3444. If you have used or plan to use a Flood Company product to brighten up your exterior space, enter Flood's monthly "before and after" photo contest for a chance to win a \$100 gift certificate to Smith & Hawken or Crate&Barrel. Visit www.flood.com/flood/DIY/IdeaGallery/BeforeandAfter for more details.

Courtesy of ARAcontent

Creativity Transforms Rundown Bank Into Cozy Home

Like a lot of people, interior designer Charles Riley had a somewhat romanticized view of living in a historic structure.

But when he purchased a small 19th century frame bank building as his dream project, he found his expectations challenged and his daydream in serious need of modification.

Riley was able to make his dream a reality, thanks to lots of flexible, creative thinking and some of the latest in home-building products, along with a commitment to energy efficiency and a respect for the architecture of the building.

"I had this idea of moving into an antique house and living with all of the bumps and warts and quirks," recalls the designer, whose work for clients has encompassed both old and new structures, but who hadn't previously owned a home.

The Greek Revival-style building had good bones, but it quickly became apparent that its "bumps and warts" would have to be dealt with in order to make it habitable.

Originally built on a stone foundation with a dirt floor, the structure had no basement. At some point a concrete floor had been added, but with the building's location at the base of a hill, run-off and natural condensation had created rotting wood along the perimeter of the house and a moisture problem inside. There was a permanent puddle in the middle of the floor. The place also came with peeling paint, ancient radiators, drafty

uninsulated windows and outmoded plumbing and electrical service.

"I changed my opinion about restoring old buildings," Riley admits, acknowledging the need to strike a balance between maintaining historic character and providing 21st-century comforts.

"I don't subscribe to the theory that a building has to be just like it was," he says. "For an old building to be useful it has to embrace modern technology. Making an old building work is the ultimate form of 'green.' You have to cherry-pick what is worth saving and weigh the value against the trade-offs in energy efficiency and cost."

The interior was completely gutted, and dormers and an addition helped to maximize living space.

Solving the moisture problem was a top priority. Decaying wood at the foundation was replaced with new rot-resistant lumber, and the yard was regraded to channel runoff away from the house.

Inside, the concrete slab floor remained cold and damp. The solution was DRICore, a modular, raised subfloor system designed specifically for use over concrete (www.dricore.com). "The raised subfloor kept the finished floors away from the cold damp concrete and made me feel a lot more secure about the finished floor installation. It was an incredibly easy solution," Riley says.

The subfloor provided another benefit. "People can't get over that such an old building could have such a level floor," the designer says. "DRICore has

a wonderful shimming system that allowed us to compensate for small uneven spots in the floor. We used a lot of shims, but the floor is level and very solid."

Riley selected an engineered wood wide-plank finished floor. "It looks like distressed, reclaimed wood, and everyone asks if it's original to the house," he says.

A new heating, air-conditioning and ventilation system, essential for good indoor air quality, was installed. A high-efficiency gas forced-air furnace was tucked under the staircase leading to the second floor, and small round openings in the ceiling perimeter are unobtrusive alternatives to conventional registers set in floors and walls. New insulation and new, energy-efficient windows in a historically correct style were installed to bring the house up to current standards for thermal efficiency. Riley carved out a living room, powder room and kitchen-family room on the first floor and two bedrooms and a full bath on the second floor. To create a comfortable, welcoming environment, he decorated his new home with an artful mix of antiques, family favorites, retro pieces and new furnishings.

Today, with its coat of deep red paint, crisp white accents, and modern comforts, the former bank building is a fine example of sensitive and practical repurposing of a historic structure.



A modular subfloor system installed over cold, damp concrete floors helped turn an old bank building into a comfortable, stylish home. At right, the furnished living room in the refurbished structure.

Buying a New Dining Room Table

by Sandra Guthrie

When you are shopping for a dining room table to fit with your preexisting furniture, there are some important things you should look for and keep in mind. These tips are great for narrowing down your selection and helping you decide on things such as design, colors, practical or not practical, and much more. Maybe you are looking for a formal table to go in your formal dining room. Perhaps you want a regular table that will fit by the window in the kitchen. A table can be used for so many things, and you will want to consider all that there is to consider about your table before you take the plunge and purchase the first one that you see. Whether you are buying all new furniture, or just wanting to give your dining room a face-lift with a new table, these tips will help keep you on track.

While you are shopping for dining room tables, having a specific design in mind, which you are looking for will help you out a lot. This will help narrow down your search for that perfect table to set off your room and make it more comfortable. Keeping in mind the design feel you are planning for the room, whether it is modern, contemporary, antique or anything else. Try to stay away from designs you want to avoid.

You will find that dining room tables come in all colors of wood finishes. These colors range from pecan, oak, cherry and many more. Knowing the color of the wood finish you want before you begin your search is a good step in the right direction. If you have other wood pieces in the room, try sticking with the same color for the best overall effect. Maybe you want to choose the wood table and then the other pieces of furniture for the room. You can do that as well. You will have a nice base piece, and can incorporate other pieces into the room, as you come across ones that you love. Maybe a matching china cabinet, or buffet for the empty wall under the window.

Do you know what size table you need? Because dining room tables come in so many sizes, from small to large, you really should take measurements of your space before shopping and know what size of table your room can accommodate. Besides, if you fell in love with a table that is too large, it might break your heart having to return it to the store because you do not have enough room. Jot down your measurements, and be sure you take them with you when you shop.

Do you want a table that is practical or a “wow” factor in the room? Because dining room tables are so versatile, you will find while shopping there are many of both kinds. From the conversational piece, to the plain Jane table that is mostly for use. Knowing the extreme you want your table beforehand is an excellent idea, and will keep you from looking at the “wow” tables, when you want practical instead.

Think about the uses you will get out of your new table. Because dining room tables can be used for more than just eating on, you may be thinking about a table that can come in handy for a poker game or board games with the family. Thinking about these things before you go shopping you will help you when you are looking around for what you want. You will also go in knowing what you want in advance.

Glass top dining room tables can come in several designs and suit many needs. Decide ahead of time if a glass top table is something you find appealing. If not, you will know to avoid looking at those, and stick with the wood tops.

Because dining room tables are so versatile, and come in so many design ranges, unfortunately, so does the price. know how much money you want to spend on your table before you go shopping. This way you can stay in your price range, and choose accordingly. If you set your budget ahead of time, and you stick with it, you will feel good knowing you did.

If you prefer wood over metal, or metal over wood, then shopping for the appropriate style of table won't be so hard. Because dining room tables come in both, you are given a nice variety to choose from. If most of the pieces in the room are metal, stick with metal and go with the theme. Besides, you don't want your new table to stick out like a sore thumb.

If you have small children and or pets, this could effect which dining room tables you have to choose from. With small children and pets in your home, avoid tables that have sharp corners and that can be broken or scratched easily. You want your children and pets to feel comfortable in your home, so taking these things into consideration before hand might save you from worrying about them injuring themselves later.

Dining room tables are great pieces of furniture. They are versatile, affordable, gorgeous, practical and numerous. Deciding which one to buy is just as much fun as it is shopping for one. When you go shopping knowing what you are looking for ahead of time, it makes finding the perfect one so much easier. Taking all of the above points into consideration before you begin your hunt, will help you narrow down your selection and make a good choice for your dining room.





A Simple Way to Increase Outdoor Living Space

For those homeowners looking to add to their living space, improve their lifestyle and increase the resale value of their home, the perfect solution is to extend your living area outdoors through the addition of decks, patios, outdoor kitchens and entertainment areas. The walls between the indoors and outdoors are coming down -- and we're seeing outdoor rooms and living areas that have all the features of indoor kitchens and family rooms.

One of the obvious solutions for increasing your outdoor living space is the development of the area beneath

raised decks. Many of them have elaborate stone fireplaces, barbecue fire pits and professional grade kitchen set-ups to create comfortable outdoor settings that they're using more than the inside of their home.

Of course, the development of a usable, enjoyable space beneath your raised deck requires you to address one problem . . . rain. All of us who have raised decks know that the area beneath it becomes unusable when it rains because the water simply drips down through the decking. That's why

the development of a new, innovative deck drainage system is drawing such rave reviews from homeowners and contractors nationwide. Unlike other deck drainage systems available on the market, this exciting new system is installed above floor joists, allowing them to remain completely dry and thus protecting the structural integrity of your deck. Just as important is the fact that the above-joist installation ensures a dry environment for the installation of electrical wiring, gas lines and soffits. This means that ceiling fans, lighting, speakers, video electronics

and outdoor kitchens can be installed; creating a fully-functional outdoor living room that provides true comfort and protection from the elements.

The real beauty of this system is its simplicity and ease of installation. Comprised of durable 20 ml, UV-protected plastic components, the system can be installed easily on any new or existing deck. Requiring only scissors and a staple gun, homeowners can install the system themselves or use a qualified deck builder. You simply place a downspout below the decking at the

end of each bay, and roll out and staple the trough to the top of the joist. The water enters through the decking into the trough, drains to the downspout and then into a gutter (not included). Apply RainEscape Butyl Waterproof Tape for an even faster and cleaner way to insure no leakage -- it really is that simple.

This system is built to last because it is not subject to the accumulation of debris or freezing. The RainEscape deck drainage system is also much less expensive than similar systems and is backed by a 20-year limited warranty.

Enhance your outdoor lifestyle while adding value to your home. If you or your deck builder would like more information on the first deck enhancement system that makes sense, contact the professional RainEscape team at (720) 348-1385, or toll free at (877) 348-1385. You can also visit their Web site at www.rainescape.com and e-mail them for free CAD Detail drawings.

ARA

Is your home in need of a new carpet? And have you looked at all the incredible fashion choices available today? Choosing wall-to-wall carpet should be the first step in your decorating journey, and to set you on your way you need a basic understanding about fibre, carpet construction and the different types of textures, styles and trends.

When selecting your new wall-to-wall carpet choose the fibre and construction best suited to your lifestyle and budget. Nylon is the most popular man-made carpet fibre, worldwide. Nylon carpet is the most wear and stain resistant, and works well in any room. Polyester yarn used to manufacture carpet is recognized for its thick feel, great colours and inherent stain resistance, and is easily cleaned. Polyester carpet is perfect for bedrooms and low traffic areas. Olefin, or polypropylene, is the second most common fibre used in the manufacture of residential carpet today. It is very affordable and is naturally stain, fade and static resistant and is an economical choice for basements, family rooms, children's bedrooms and home offices. Wool, less popular in North America due to a high price tag, is less soil and stain resistant but noted for its durability and luxuriousness. More on carpetfibre performance and decorating with carpet is available online at www.yourhomestyle.ca.

Besides the choice of fibres, the quality and performance of carpet is further determined by how it's constructed. Carpet construction is defined by how the fibres are twisted and heat set, and the density of the yarn tufts. Twisting refers to the number of times a carpet tuft is twisted - tightly twisted fibres are very durable and perform well in high traffic areas. Heat setting is the process that sets the twists either by heat or steam enabling prolonged resilience over time. Density simply means that

the closer together the strands are at the base of the carpet, the more dense the carpet, and this will affect how the carpet looks and performs. Superior carpet performance is a function of the right combination of fibre, construction and style. Today's latest manufacturing technology in Canada, produces wall-to-wall carpet designed for enhanced performance and long lasting beauty.

"Carpet typically fits into five main style categories that offer an endless array of home styling options" says Karyn Kelly, the marketing manager for Beaulieu Canada, Canada's largest carpet manufacturer.

Many consider a plush saxony to be the traditional carpet style with its smooth and luxurious surface which is perfect for a traditional décor in a master bedroom, dining room or formal living room. Textured carpet is a cut pile with alternating twists of yarn. It is extremely good at hiding footprints and is popular for any room in the home. Frieze, a fresh popular décor trend, is a special thick textured carpet with very high, tight yarn twists. Frieze carpet is excellent for high traffic areas and family living spaces as it hides footprints and vacuum lines. Level-loop or multi-level loop carpets, such as berbers, are great all-purpose carpets for casual and active rooms in the home. And lastly, cut and loop carpet styles offer great design interest through the variation in the surface texture. Cut and loop styles add character to a floor with soft botanical or contemporary geometric patterns.

When you shop for your carpet your choices within the style categories are limitless. Have fun decorating your home and look for a wall-to-wall carpet that fits your lifestyle and budget.

News Canada



Carpet fashion today

Roller Blinds

Roller blinds with colours, patterns, textures for every look and so easy to operate!

Love that light! Elegant roller shades in translucent fabrics provide individual control of brightness at each window.

By Janice Morissette

I remember when I moved into my first apartment, straight out of university, the only window coverings I could afford were basic roller shades. Plain white, no fun at all. In fact, getting the shade to stay at the right level was a major source of frustration.

All that has changed. Today's roller shades from Levolor Window Fashions can add style to any room and any window. Plus operation is sure and simple. A beaded chain lets you position the shade precisely where you need it, and you can even add a remote control, which lets you adjust each blind without leaving your armchair.

"You can have plain white if you want, but our roller shades are available in over 50 different fabrics," says Mary Dobson, spokesperson for Levolor in Canada. "Among them is the Soho Collection, which is warm and sophisticated, and the Impressions Collection which adds a gentle touch of colour. I very much like the Sheerweave fabrics, which reduce the light level without concealing the world outside."

Simple dress-up options lift your roller shades out of the ordinary. Add decorative hems or a matching fabric valance to complement your roller shade. Valances come in two types, the standard extending valance or a modern Fascia valance that lies flat inside the window frame to conceal the hardware.

In short, roller shades give you simple, reliable control of natural light, and provide a starting point for a more ambitious window treatment - just add layers of drapes or sheers for a traditional or cozy style. The beauty of today's roller shades is that they also look so good all on their own for a clean contemporary space or if you want to pare things down in the warmer months.

Take a closer look at the today's roller shades at www.levolor.ca. N/C



Tips to Flip Over

Ten easy ways to update your home for resale

When looking to purchase a home, prospective buyers consider a variety of factors - from a fair deal in a good neighbourhood to how the home will suit their lifestyle.

“The key to selling your home is to make the purchaser wish they lived there,” says Jacqueline Glass, Toronto-based interior decorator. “Making small changes to show prospective buyers the lifestyle that your home offers are often the difference between a bid made or lost.”

Glass offers these tips for preparing your home for resale:

1. Steam clean carpets and consider installing hardwood flooring or ceramic tiles.
2. Paint walls in a neutral but pleasing hue.
3. Replace the faucets in your bathroom; stylish and contemporary fixtures, such as the Arzo Bath Collection by Delta, exude a luxury feel at an affordable price point.
4. Change a toilet, sink or counter to a neutral tone for an instant update.
5. Paint the tiles in a bathroom or the kitchen to inexpensively upgrade a space.
6. Do an all over clean-up and purge of your home. Prospective buyers often can't see beyond clutter.
7. Increase the curb appeal of your home by planting flowers or placing planters in the front and back yards.

8. Use a lightly scented oil to add a fresh scent to your home. Similarly, putting on a pot of coffee or baking a cake produces pleasant smells that evoke the feeling of home.

9. Depersonalize your home by removing family photographs to help potential buyers envision themselves in the space.

10. Help the homeowner see the possibilities - set the table for dinner with flowers, fine dishes and cutlery or run the bath

and add floating candles, leaving out a robe or a set of fresh towels to enhance the feel of a spa-like setting.

Check out the latest from Delta Faucet by visiting www.deltafaucet.com.

- News Canada



One of the hottest trends in decorating today is the concept of “the Outdoor Room.” In this process, the home’s outdoor spaces are decorated with fashion, design, and coloration while allowing for the ability to withstand the elements. Making this exterior decorating possible is what the industry calls performance fabrics and fibers. With the use of these fabrics, fibers and finishes, outdoor living spaces are becoming the showplaces of many homes. Why not take the features that make outdoor furnishings last long, look great, and feel relaxing and bring them to the indoors? Performance, plus fashion, plus comfort, equals durable décor... it’s not just for the outdoors anymore!

Performance - The use of performance fibers and fabrics is not a new concept. However, with the latest advancements and introduction of such revolutionary yarns as DuraCord(r), performance has risen to a new level. Outdoor fibers are constructed to resist fading due to solution dyeing during the creation of the fibers. As in the case of DuraCord(r), this type of fiber also resists staining due to a low moisture regain. Stains can not set in as the fibers are non-absorbent. Although the fibers work to resist mildew, cleaning still is a breeze with soap and water or with a bleach-and-water solution for tougher stains. The solution dyed fabrics and yarns are colorfast and are not affected by bleach use. How better to cover that indoor sofa than with fabrics that can sit in the window and never fade or cleanup with ease from that spilled wine during pizza and movie night?

Fashion - Bringing outdoor fabric inside used to mean color pallets of the many shades of twigs and moss. Even less was available in design choices. This just isn’t the case anymore as performance fabrics are now ablaze with coloration and original art designs. “Fabrics, like DuraCord(r), offer beautiful original designs in multiple motifs, from bold stripes to intricate jacquard prints,” states Bill Rosso, president, Nags Head Hammocks. “Many styles give the customer the option of using the rocker, rugs or seating set anywhere in the home.” This versatility is due to the manufacturers following indoor color trends as much as outdoor trends.

Comfort - Until recently, performance outdoor fabrics and fibers have had the reputation of having a comfort level similar to sitting on Great Aunt Effie’s plastic couch covers. Not so now... all good décor, indoors or out, incorporates lasting comfort. Soft woven designs equaling the hand of cotton are available with durability as a bonus. Delustering and tazlinizing, or teasing, of the fibers in yarn creation results in this soft, perfect-for-curling-up, comfortable feel. “The softness feature is most requested in lounging furniture to outdoor rugs,” states J.R. Pelletier, manager of TheHammockCompany.com. “But lounging is not just found on the deck.” Retailers are finding that comfort

Durable Décor ... It’s Not Just for the Outdoors Anymore

coupled with durability is being requested for unique interior spaces such as libraries with large windows or busy bonus rooms. Durable décor is not only a trend that is gaining popularity with

homeowners nationwide. It also makes good sense. When it comes to pricing it is on par with indoor pieces with lead times often shorter due to seasonal demands requiring the stocking of inventories. The

long-lasting, good-looking, and comfortable features found in decorating for outdoor spaces is finding its way to the indoors without any compromise on color, design, or comfort. Durable décor... it’s not just for

outdoors anymore. For more information visit www.hatterashammocks.com, www.nagshead.com, www.thehammockcompany.com, or www.duracordtextiles.com.



Durable Décor items include outdoor rope, fabrics and rugs from DuraCord®

Increase Your Home's Value with Exterior Home Improvements



Spring — typically a time for cleaning and de-cluttering is just around the corner. In addition to sprucing up your home's interior, you should also think about what you can do outside the walls of your house. Is there an exterior home improvement project for which you've been saving money or putting off until you have the time? What outdoor project would be most beneficial in terms of adding curb appeal and value to your home?

Before beginning any home exterior projects, you should consider the following:

- * Budget -- Make sure it's realistic and stick to it.
- * Goals -- Define your desired outcomes for the completed project. For example, do you want to increase the resale value of your home, or are you doing much-needed remodeling?
- * Sources -- Consult reliable contractors, builders, architects and realtors for advice. Get tips from friends and neighbors, too.

Re-roofing is one common home exterior project that increases home value. Homeowners often are forced to put a new roof on their home after weather or fire damage. They also may be facing expired warranties on the roofing material. More and more often, homeowners are re-roofing to enhance the curb appeal of a home, even if it's not on the market.

There are several criteria to think about when choosing a roofing material. Most importantly, does it have weather and fire resistance classifications? Also, what is the product warranty? You should also consider a roofing material's aesthetic value and ensure it complements your home's style and design. In addition to traditional roofing materials, such as asphalt, shake, slate or tile, composite roofing is an increasingly popular choice. Composite shingles offer the

look of real slate or wood shake shingles, but provide more durability and safety features.

Deck additions are another popular exterior project that can easily increase a home's value. Typically the centerpiece to a front or backyard, a deck is the foundation for creating an outdoor living space. If you currently have a deck, evaluate the condition and look of the material and consider an upgrade.

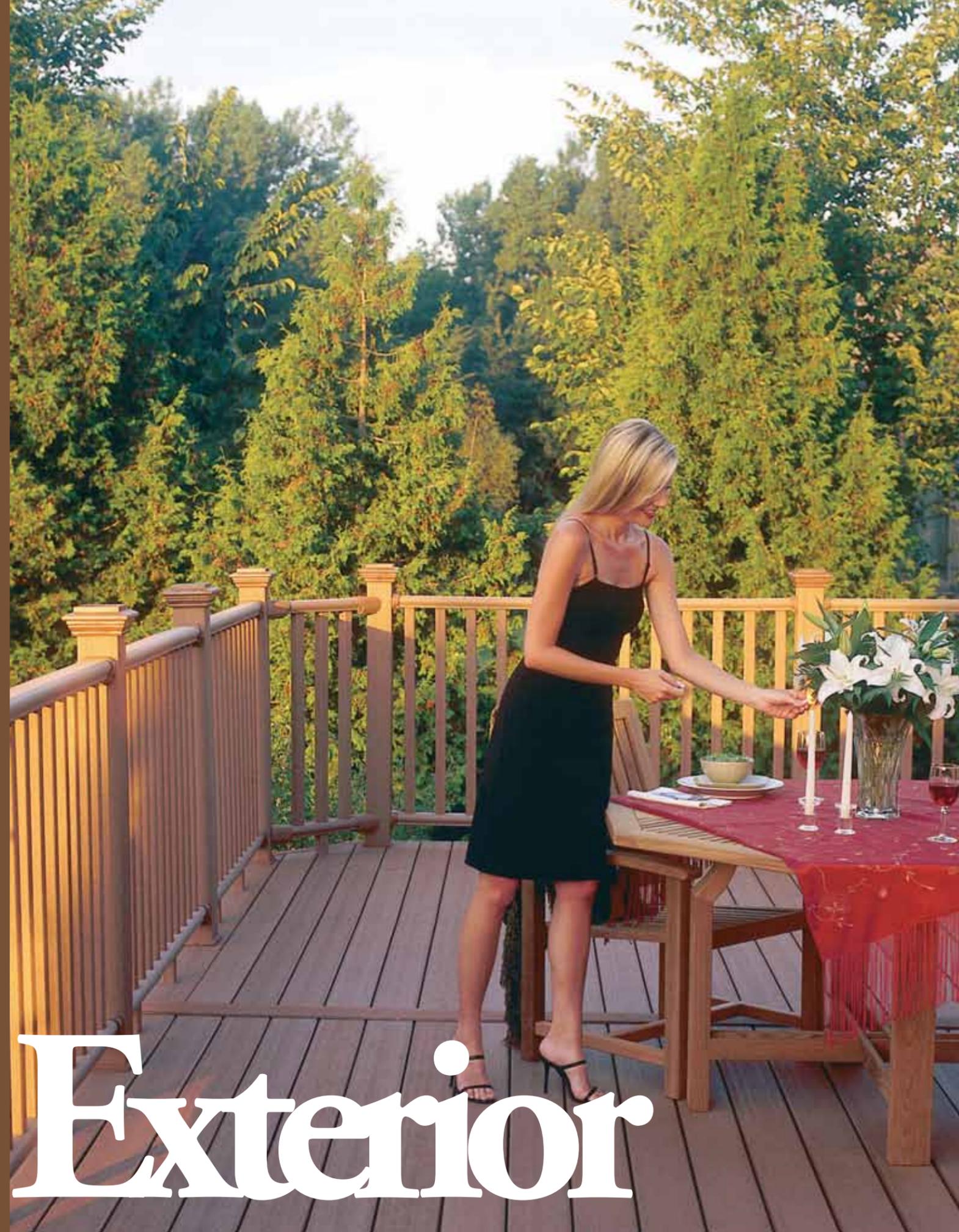
There are two primary types of decking material -- natural wood or composite. Composites, such as the EverGrain Vibrance Collection, offer the look and grain pattern of real wood with a 25-year limited warranty. Begin by choosing a material that will complement the architecture and exterior style of your home. Durability and low maintenance also are two important considerations for any deck -- after all, you should spend more time enjoying the deck than caring for it.

Exterior home improvement projects are a smart investment in your home. According to data from a recent survey conducted by national research firm Synovate for TAMKO Building Products, a leading building products manufacturer, more than 65 percent of homeowners look for roofing material that will make their roof better-looking and add curb appeal to their homes.

Furthermore, Remodeling magazine's Cost vs. Value Report reports that homeowners can recoup 76.8 percent of the cost of a deck addition in home resale value. And, between 72.9 and 73.9 percent of midrange and upscale roofing replacement costs, respectively, can be recovered.

No matter what home improvements you make, choose a project that will most benefit your home, one of the largest investments you'll ever make, in the long-run.

Courtesy of ARAcontent



Exterior