



Easy Holiday Home Improvement Projects

It's not too late to tackle one or two of these Easy Holiday Home Improvement Projects. Depending upon your budget and time, we're certain you can make holiday upgrades your guests are going to notice and love!

Update Your Kitchen Backsplash

A new backsplash can make a big impact in an outdated kitchen, and give your kitchen a fresh design boost. A backsplash can be a kitchen's focal point but in an elegant and understated way. According to Moss Building & Design Expert, Lisa Ladson, "letting your backsplash take a backseat and play more of a supporting role is the trend right now," she says.

Upgrade Your Lighting

Recessed downlights are a great way to revamp a dim contemporary interior and make it look brighter. They're an easy way to control the amount of light in each room and allow you to set the mood. Plus, they save energy and help your light bulbs last longer.

Update Your Fireplace

Nothing goes together like the holidays and a great fireplace. Consider changing your fireplace's facade. Thinking big? Create a stone facade that reaches to the ceiling. Not that kind of time or money? Refinish your wood fireplace or give it an updated paint job. If your facade is brick, consider a fresh coat of paint on the bricks if they're outdated or an eyesore.

Change Your Cabinet Hardware

If the knobs and pulls on your cabinets and doors are broken, tired, or just look outdated, change them out on the cheap. This is a Small Kitchen Upgrade with a Big Impact – and only a little impact on your budget.

Replace Your Front Door

This project can run you anywhere from a couple of hundred bucks to thousands of dollars depending on what style door you choose. Your front door makes a big impact on your home's curb appeal. This is a great way to update and modernize the look of your home's entryway and a focal point. Also, it can cut down on your energy costs, and improve the security of your home, especially if you're replacing an older door.

...or Just Give it a New Coat of Paint

If replacing your front door is too large a task to tackle this month, consider making a bold statement for a little money with a beautiful new color for your front door.

December is a busy month, and we all have lots to do. We hope our ideas for some Easy Holiday Home Improvement Projects will inspire you to make one or two impactful updates to your home. This way, when the holidays arrive, you can relax and enjoy the people around you...and your upgrades.



Philip Nastasi Jr.
REALTOR®, ABR®, SRES®
DRE # 01892875
Rodeo Realty Inc
Phone: 818-489-1960
pnastjr@justthepperfecthome.com
WWW.JUSTTHEPERFECTHOME.COM

December Calendar

- December 7 - Pearl Harbor Day
- December 22 - Hanukkah Begins
- December 25 - Christmas Day
- December 31 - New Year's Eve

Homeowner Tip:



Let Your Oven Breathe

Ovens need airflow so make sure dirt, dust, or other debris are not shortening the lifespan of your appliance. Keep the area surrounding your oven clutter free. Vacuum its motor (located at the back of the appliance) and remove dust and dirt buildup to improve your oven's airflow.

The Lowdown on Mysterious Mistletoe

This holiday season, should you find yourself standing awkwardly beneath the mistletoe with someone you barely know, change the subject and fascinate your suitor with our list of little-known mistletoe facts:

1. Although capable of growing on its own, Mistletoe is actually a parasite. The plant attaches itself to the host (usually a tree) and grows out from the branches.

2. It is believed that the tradition of kissing beneath mistletoe started in ancient Greece. It was used in marriage ceremonies because of its association with fertility.

3. Mistletoe is poisonous to humans, but is a great source of food for birds. Butterflies use the nectar, and bees gather pollen from it.

4. During Medieval days, folks believed mistletoe possessed mystical powers which could bring good luck to a family during December and ward off evil spirits.

5. The name mistletoe comes from two Anglo Saxon words: 'Mistal' (meaning dung) and 'tan' (meaning stick). That leaves us with "poop stick" which might make your suitor a little less likely to want to kiss beneath it.



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Super (Simple) Peppermint Bark

Make this homemade, holiday favorite for your friends and neighbors this season. Just leave out the part about how easy it was to make.

Ingredients:

- 12 oz. semisweet chocolate, chopped
- 12 oz. white chocolate, chopped
- 1/2 tsp. peppermint extract
- 8 candy canes, crushed

Directions:

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Fill the bottom of a large pot with 3" water and bring to simmer over

medium heat. Reduce heat to low, then place a large heatproof bowl on top. Add semi-sweet chocolate and stir occasionally until chocolate has melted. Stir in extract. Pour into prepared baking sheet and spread into an even layer with an offset spatula. Refrigerate until set, about 20 minutes.

Over the same pot of barely simmering water, place another large heatproof bowl. Add white chocolate and stir until melted. Pour over set semi-sweet chocolate then top immediately with candy canes. Refrigerate until set, about 20 minutes.



Photo & recipe courtesy of delish.com