

**Lemon aid for rust stains**

You're sitting around relaxing on your patio and just as you're about to squeeze a lemon into your cool drink, you notice rust stains on the concrete caused by your aging metal outdoor furniture. What should you do? Set down your drink and go in search of cleaning solutions and a wire brush? No need for that. The answer literally is in hand — the lemon you are holding. Finish squeezing it into your drink, then reach down and rub what's left on the rust stains. Wipe with a soft towel or cloth, and the stains will disappear before your ice cubes melt.

**Pulling up patio pavers**

Concrete patio blocks and brick pavers often are set in beds of sand or stone dust to create outdoor walkways, patios and shed floors. Although they are durable, occasionally a few will settle unevenly or crack in half. Here's how to remove one block without disturbing the others around it:

Fashion a pair of "puller-uppers" from two 8-inch-long pieces of wire clothes hanger. Use pliers to bend a 1-inch-long finger on the end of each wire piece. Bend the other end of each wire in the opposite direction to create 3-inch-long handles. Both ends should be bent to 90 degrees.

Slip the wire fingers down into the sand or stone dust alongside the block you want to lift out. Twist the handles 90 degrees so the fingers turn underneath the block. Then simply pull up to remove the block.

**Cola cleans**

For rust, crust and greasy goo, grab a can of cola. When chrome faucets get water spots, or auto trim and bumpers become rusty, moisten the shiny side of aluminum foil with cola, rub lightly, wipe and watch the shine return. To clean toilets, pour in some cola and let it sit. Then swish, and porcelain will sparkle. For grease and oil stains on concrete, sprinkle cat litter on the spots, grind it in with your foot, sweep it up, then pour on some cola, scrub with a stiff broom or brush, and when the cola stops fizzing, rinse with hot water. Scrub any trace stains with a cup of bleach and a cup of laundry detergent in a gallon of very hot water.

**Waterproofing outside brick**

Sealing brick (anywhere on the outside of a home) is a major task, but is an extremely important one. When brick is not properly sealed, water gets into its pores and when it freezes the water expands from within and causes the surface of the brick to chip off (known as spalling). But don't just seal the brick. Pressure-wash it first and then repair any cracked, chipped or missing grout. When this has been done, the sealer can be added. A high-quality silicone-based material will do the trick. Expect to pay about \$40 to \$50 per gallon. It's expensive, but worth it.

**Roof pitch**

The angle, or pitch, of a roof is calculated by the number of inches it rises vertically for every 12 inches it extends horizontally. For example, a roof that rises 6 inches for every 12 inches of horizontal run has a 6-inch-12 pitch.

Knowing the pitch of your roof is useful when designing an addition, installing skylights or cutting new rafter boards. Here's an easy, safe way to figure the pitch from inside your attic. You'll need an 18- or 24-inch level, tape measure and a pencil.

First, measure 12 inches from one end of the level and make a mark. Then, in the attic, place the end of the level against the bottom of a roof rafter and hold it perfectly level. Now measure vertically from the 12-inch mark on the level straight up to the underside of the rafter. That measurement is the number of inches the roof rises in 12 inches.

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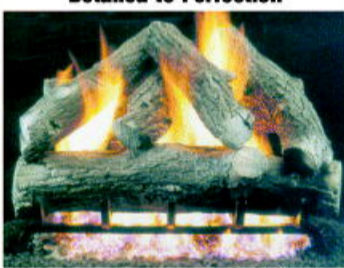
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