

Selecting carpet

Shopping for carpet? Not all carpet is created equal. The type of fiber and the method of construction determine how well a carpet will perform and keep its original appearance. Carpet density directly relates to the amount of yarn used. Here's a simple density test that you can make when carpet shopping: bend the carpet and note how close the individual tufts are to each other, and how much of the backing is exposed. Press down with one finger to see how easy it is to penetrate the backing. The stronger the backing, the better the carpet. Want to know more about carpet buying and care? Call the Carpet and Rug Institute in Dalton, Ga., at 800-882-8846. They have several consumer brochures that are free for the asking.

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Repairing rotted wood

Damaged wood sills and frames prompt consumers to consider spending thousands in replacement costs. Most people don't realize that rotted wood frames can be repaired. A two-phase, two-part epoxy repair kit is needed. Scoop out the soft, rotted wood, mix the two-part liquid that makes up phase one and apply it to the affected area as a weather seal and bonding coat. Use the two-part putty that makes up phase two to fill the hole. The finished product can be planed or sanded like wood. Use an oil primer and an oil- or latex-finish coat to make the frame look new again.

Concrete painting tip

Here's a tip that will make paint on concrete stick the next time you paint. You can keep the paint from peeling off by washing the floor first with warm water; then rinse and let the floor dry thoroughly for a least a day. Using a clean paint brush, apply a coat of white vinegar as a pre-paint primer. Once it dries, it will increase the bond, and the paint you apply will hold and last much longer. This works on most concrete items and benefits many other types of surfaces, too, such as metal, wood, or plastic.

Bathroom ventilation options

Section 1205 of the Uniform Building Code (1979) states that where bathrooms have natural ventilation by means of operable exterior openings (windows or skylights) with a minimum of one-and-one-half square feet, a mechanical ventilation system or bath fan is not required. So much for building code minimums; even though you have an operable window, you might, in fact, need a fan. When there is an abundance of steam accumulating, it is a sure sign that a fan is needed. In addition to attacking a steam problem, bathroom fans can help to remove odors. There is no such thing as a noiseless exhaust fan but some are less noisy than others. Fans are rated by the cubic feet per minute (CFM) of air that they move, and also are rated by the level of noise they emit. The building code requires that a bath fan provide a minimum of five air changes per hour. Some simple math will tell you just what size fan you will need.

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