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## CUSTOM HOME BUILDING & HOME REMODELING

SPRING NEWS 2019

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## SEASONAL HOME IMPROVEMENT: Spring Maintenance Checklist

Once the ground has dried and the trees begin to bud, it's time to prepare your home for spring. On top of your regular spring cleaning, you'll also want to consider these general home maintenance tips. Use our spring home maintenance checklist to make sure everything in your home from the basement to the roof is in tip-top shape.

- Inspect roofing for missing, loose, or damaged shingles and leaks.
- Change the air-conditioner filter.
- Clean window and door screens.
- Polish wood furniture, and dust light fixtures.
- Refinish the deck
- Power-wash windows and siding.
- Remove leaves and debris from gutters and downspouts.
- Replace the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Have a professional inspect and pump the septic tank.
- Inspect sink, shower, and bath caulking for deterioration.
- Vacuum lint from dryer vent.
- Inspect chimney for damage.
- Repair or replace caulking and weather stripping around windows, doors, wall penetrations and roof flashings.
- Remove insulation from outdoor faucets and check sprinkler heads.
- Have air-conditioning system serviced.
- Drain or flush water heater.
- Fertilize your lawn.

Lic. #494766

# 3 Easy Steps to Declutter Your Garage

We get it. It's a big space. But that doesn't mean you should just put everything in there, wherever it fits, and look away.

Don't worry, we can help you organize your garage in three easy steps:

## 1. Make a Plan

First, consider the space and how to use it best. Already stumped? Start by hand drawing a floorplan, taking some measurements, and deciding where you'll put the big stuff. For the rest, be sure to plan on putting what you'll use most where you can get it easiest, as well as the opposite. Leaving space for a workbench and tools is also ideal, when possible. It's just as important to consider what to remove. Remember: garages are often unheated, poorly insulated, and accessible to outdoor critters. So certain items should be kept elsewhere, including: plugged-in refrigerators (inefficient in high/low temperatures), paint cans (last longer indoors), pet food (too tempting for critters), paper products (ruined by humidity and mold), and noxious or flammable chemicals (better off in a shed).



## 2. Get Organized

After that, begin mentally or physically creating piles. One for things to keep, one to give/throw away, and another of things to sell. Take care of the non-keeper piles first, and do it fast. Many second-hand stores take bulk donations, and some accept unused building supplies. Then schedule a garage sale or list your sell-able items online right away. After that, begin dividing the keeper items into categories of similar objects, like "tools," "camping stuff," "clothes," "kids stuff," "holiday items," "keepsakes"...the list goes on. After that, break those groups down more. Whose is it? What's it made of? What's it for? Let your organizational impulse run wild and never be afraid to use COLOR coded bins or stickies. Once like is grouped with like, and you know where you want it to go, it's time for some exercise.



## 3. Get Moving

That's right, the physical portion of garage decluttering. You knew it was coming, right? Don't worry, it can be fun too. The key is having a place to put everything. So after leaving space for the big stuff, get to work creating perfect little spaces for everything else. Just take it one pre-organized category at a time. Of course, it helps to have enough containers, cupboards, hooks, shelves, jars, and boxes (just not paper ones, remember). One thing you should really focus on is utilizing every inch of the wall space to save floor space for vehicles and walking on. You can stack, hang, shelf, peg, or hook a lot to garage walls, which are usually ten to twelve feet tall. Finally, make sure you have plenty of small or partitioned organizers, containers, and jars. When decluttering a garage, remember that it's always okay to sweat the small stuff.





# TOP 6

## KITCHEN LAYOUTS



**ONE-WALL.** Originally called the “Pullman kitchen,” the one-wall kitchen layout is generally found in studio or loft spaces because it’s the ultimate space saver. Cabinets and appliances are fixed on a single wall. Most modern designs also include an island, which evolves the space into a sort of Galley style with a walk-through corridor.



**GALLEY.** This efficient, “lean” layout is ideal for smaller spaces and one-cook kitchens. The galley kitchen, also called a walk-through kitchen, is characterized by two walls opposite of each other—or two parallel countertops with a walkway in between them. Galleys make the best use of every square inch of space, and there are no troublesome corner cabinets to configure, which can add to a cabinetry budget.



**L-SHAPE.** An L-shaped kitchen solves the problem of maximizing corner space, and it’s a smart design for small and medium sized kitchens. The versatile L-shaped kitchen consists of countertops on two adjoining walls that are perpendicular, forming an L. The “legs” of the L can be as long as you want, though keeping them less than 12 to 15 feet will allow you to efficiently use the space.



**HORSESHOE.** The horseshoe, or U-shape, kitchen layout has three walls of cabinets/appliances. Today, this design has evolved from three walls to an L-shaped kitchen with an island forming the third “wall.” This design works well because it allows for traffic flow and workflow around the island. You can get more cooks into the kitchen.



**ISLAND.** A working kitchen island may include appliances and cabinetry for storage—and it always adds additional work surface to a kitchen. It can provide a place to eat (with stools), to prepare food (with a sink) and to store beverages (with a wine cooler). The island can turn a one-wall kitchen into a galley style, and an L-shaped layout into a horseshoe.



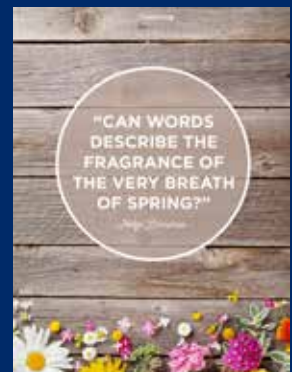
**PENINSULA.** A peninsula kitchen is basically a connected island, converting an L-shaped layout into a horseshoe, or turning a horseshoe kitchen into a G-shaped design. Peninsulas function much like islands but offer more clearance in kitchens that do not allow appropriate square footage for a true island.

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- Bill Freeman



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TOP 6 KITCHEN LAYOUTS  
3 EASY STEPS TO DECLUTTER YOUR GARAGE  
7 DIY PROJECTS YOU MAY REGRET

**FREEMAN'S CONSTRUCTION INC.**  
Construction and Consulting Services  
P.O. Box 2576, Ramona, CA 92065  
760-788-6846 | [www.tfonline.com](http://www.tfonline.com)

## 7 DIY Projects Homeowners Regret Doing the Most

is to be reasonable with your installation plans. If you have no experience in home improvement, hire a professional. If you have some experience, consider laminate wood flooring instead. Only advanced DIYers should tackle installing real hardwood floors.

### 5. FINISH BASEMENT

Finishing a basement is not a weekend project. You might have to lay carpet (see: regret #4), install drywall, wire new electrical fixtures, or work with plumbing. With so much on your hands, leave it to the pros to tackle the big work. Then, you'll be able to focus on more manageable projects like painting the walls and installing built-in storage units.



### 4. INSTALL CARPET

Many of the homeowners who said they regretted installing their own carpet claimed lack of durability as the culprit. Not only is it a lot of measuring, cutting, gluing, and trimming, but if it's not done right, it's a mistake you'll have to live with every day. If you're still up for the challenge you'll have to buy the right tools and watch a good YouTube video.

### 3. REFINISH HARDWOOD FLOORS

According to the study, 40% of people who take on flooring projects end up with regrets. While the study didn't specify

why homeowners regretted refinishing their hardwood floors, we're betting it's because their floors were engineered wood. The experts recommend only refinishing your own hardwood floor if the planks are 3/4-inch thick and solid. Anything smaller or layered, such as engineered wood, should be left for the pros.

### 2. REPLACE A CEILING

As you might expect, there's a lot that goes into replacing your ceiling. You first need to clear out any insulation, remove drywall, potentially add joists, and then fasten the new drywall or panel—all while working on a ladder. Save yourself the struggle and call in a professional for this home improvement project. According to the study, those who choose to replace a ceiling on their own actually caused more damage than improvement.

### 1. INSTALL FLOOR TILES

Installing floor tiles is the number one home project that homeowners regretted doing themselves, according to the study. While there are many reasons why installing floor tiles can be a headache, many agreed that they were disappointed with the results because it didn't hold up over time. If you want an easier approach with lasting results, consider laying floating floors in your kitchen, living room, or basement. This DIY solution doesn't involve messy grout, is cost-effective, and can be done in a weekend.

By Hannah Bruneman