

FEBRUARY 2021

THE MORNING JOURNAL

HOMES ALMANAC



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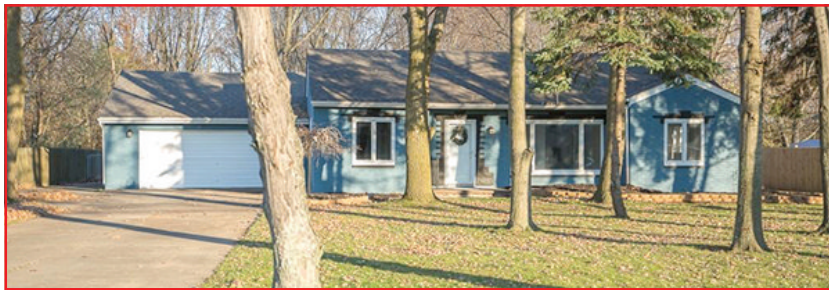
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4 Tips for a Productive 2021

(Family Features) This year has taught many workers a thing or two about being productive when offices and homes blend into one.

As the calendar turns to 2021, consider these key products and processes to stay productive next year.

Find a system (and stick to it): Creating an organizing system is an easy way to ensure your at-home workspace is ready for optimal productivity. Designate space to house all your work items - a drawer, cabinet or box - and keep work items organized by type (pens, papers, computer gear, etc.) At the end of each day, transitioning to “offline hours” can be easier when you have a place to stow your work items.

Start your day clean: Studies have shown cleanliness has a direct impact on productivity. Yet, many people struggle to find the time and energy to clean, especially at the end of a busy day at home. An option like The DEEBOT T8 from Ecovacs provides a hands-free cleaning experience, complete with the time-saving benefits of an all-in-one robot vacuum and floor mop, along with TrueDetect technology to avoid tangling in small objects. Easily controlled via an app, just set it to clean before bed and wake up to a tidy workspace.

Break up your day: With so many hours at home in front of a computer, workdays can get a little monotonous. Break up the day to make working from home feel as “normal” as possible - shower in the morning, take a walk or drive to coffee then make time for at least two breaks throughout the day. Some people have found success with the Po-



odoro Technique, which is breaking your day up into 25-minute chunks of work, with 5-minute rest periods. If you continue to work until you feel like taking a break, odds are you’ll overwork yourself until it’s too late to take the “big break” you had in mind.

Bookend your days with mindfulness: At the beginning and end of each workday, do a 3-5-minute mindfulness meditation. Before signing on to

work for the day, allow your mind to fully focus on the day’s tasks at-hand. Signoff by doing another meditation to end the day and let go of any worries or stresses you might have. Incorporating this tactic into your daily routine can help create a natural boundary from work and home while also restoring peace of mind.

Find more solutions to help maintain productivity at [Ecovacs.com](https://www.ecovacs.com).



Identify Your Ideal Kitchen Design Style

While you may see kitchens in a variety of styles and find them all beautiful in their own way, finding inspiration for your dream kitchen often requires sorting through many different considerations. From transitional to modern and every style in-between, these ideas can help you decide what suits your home while also fitting your personal tastes.

Find more inspiration at [wellborn.com](https://www.wellborn.com).



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Please contact our admissions professionals to learn more. We will explain our winter savings program and our safe move in process in detail. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Streamline your outdoor living/ dining/playing area

(MS) — Be ready when spring arrives to get busy sprucing up your home's exterior and its outdoor living space. Invest family time to envision which projects would transform it into a more organized, inviting retreat from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Do doors, door frames, porches/railings, gates, decks, patios, and out-buildings need to be cleaned, repaired, repainted or replaced? Do you need more furniture, flower boxes or play equipment like cornhole boards?

Once a project list is made, visit your local Woodcraft store, go online at woodcraft.com, or use a Woodcraft catalog and call 800-225-1153 to stock up on all the tools, materials and supplies you need. Woodcraft store employees can help with advice about products and projects, technical support is available at 800-535-4486, and woodcraft.com offers how-to articles and videos.

Woodcraft Magazine Classic Project Plans make it easy to build the inviting Swing Bed (pictured), as well as picnic tables, benches, hand grill carts, potting benches, Adirondack chairs,

and much more.

Restoring Outdoor Projects, a Woodcraft blog, offers tips to make Adirondack chairs and other wood pieces and structures look new again. Download the free PDF at https://www.woodcraft.com/blog_entries/restoring-outdoor-projects.

Cleanup & Repairs

Howard Clean-A-Finish Wood Soap easily breaks down grease, grime and wax on all wood surfaces. It effectively cleans without ammonia or bleach by using a traditional blend of gentle yet powerful, natural soaps. Use it also on plastics, upholstery, carpet and vinyl.

Blue Bear Paint and Urethane Stripper (SOY-Gel™) is Franmar Chemical's effective, effortless and odorless coating remover made from soybeans and natural elements.

Briwax ChaiRX is an easy solution for repairing loose chair joints. Inject ChaiRX into a small hole you drill in the joint, and the thin unique formulation will penetrate the wood cells to permanently swell the joints and bond them together. In 12 hours, the chair will be wiggle-free. For other gluing tasks, consider Titebond III Ultimate Waterproof Glue, a waterproof adhesive designed for interior and exterior use that has superior strength, is unaffected by finishes, and cleans up with water.

Building

For layout tasks, pick the Pinnacle Combination Square – blade, square head and center finder. The 12" blade features extra fine graduations in 8ths, 16ths and 32nds. Combination head has a scribe and spirit level.

Saw wood to size with the Festool CARVEX PS 420 EBQ-PLUS Jig-saw that can cut up to 43/4" wood beams, as well as aluminum and steel. The Razorsaw Ryobi handsaw from Gyokucho, also a powerful cutting tool, has ripping and crosscutting teeth on opposite sides and an adjustable pivot point for angled cutting in tight spaces.



Build this comfy Swing Bed using a downloadable plan, tools and supplies from Woodcraft.

Norton Hand Sanding Kits cover most sanding chores. Detail Sander fits well in hard-to-reach places. Finishing Block Sander makes general sanding quick and comfortable.

The Montana Brand 4-in-1 Drill and Driver comes in a 10-piece set that includes all you will need to drive #6, #8, #10, and #12 screws. Add the Montana Brand 3-Piece HD Self-Centering Plug Cutter Set – unique in the woodworking industry – and you are ready to build in the outdoors.

For fastening, consider the handy Freeman 23-Gauge 1" Pinner & 2" Brad Nailer Combo Kit.

Finishing

If color is a factor in painting an outdoor project, select General Finishes Milk Paint, available in 33 colors. This high-tech, water-based acrylic paint is durable, easy to apply and rated for interior and exterior use. Colors may be mixed or used with General Finishes water-based Glazes and Wood Stains to create decorative

finishes and effects.

Other coverings for outdoor projects include:

- General Finishes Exterior 450 Varnish is for outdoor use. UV absorbers minimize fading, and mildewcides help retard mold and fungus growth. It is ready to sand in one hour.

- System Three Marine Spar Varnish is a urethane-enhanced film finish formulated to protect against the harshest salt water and marine environments, as well as protect outdoor projects.

To apply coverings by hand, consider Redtree Onyx White China Bristle Brushes (solvent-based finishes) or Redtree Matey Synthetic Bristle Brushes (water-based finishes).

For spraying, the HOMERIGHT Super Finish Max features a built-in 450-watt sprayer, eliminating the need for a hose or motor to move around. Spray milk paint, chalk-style paint, latex paint, enamels, primers, urethanes, stains and varnishes.

Restoring Outdoor Projects

Add years to the life of your lawn and patio furniture

By Marlen Kemmet

Year after year outdoor furniture pieces take a brutal beating from Mother Nature in the form of intense sunlight, temperature extremes, moisture, windblown dirt and pollen, and insects. To wage the good fight and extend the life of these cherished pieces, follow along as I take you step by step through the rehab of an Adirondack chair, solving common problems that afflict most outdoor projects, and extending its useful life.

Can this project be saved?

In quite of your life-affair with a favorite garden bench that you built years ago, you may find it's time to part company with it and start anew. Over time, all wood projects reach the point of no return. But, in the case of the Adirondack chair, it was worth the time and effort for me to restore this weathered old friend. How can you tell if an outdoor project has passed its prime? Conduct a quick and simple evaluation. For starters, check for severe wood rot, warping, or large checks or cracks in individual parts. Looks can be deceiving. At first blush, the Adirondack chair looked destined for the landfill. But underneath the grit, lichen, and grime was a perfectly functional piece in need of a little TLC. Although the wood appeared badly weathered, a little sanding and scraping



on the bottom side of a seat slat revealed sound lumber. Next, check the joints for further rot, looseness, and hardware issues that undermine the project's structural integrity. Are replacement parts or new hardware in order? With seating of any kind, these are critical for safety. Is the finish flaking or otherwise compromised? Luckily, all the problems with our example proved fixable.

If what you are facing is a lost cause, you may find it cheaper and far more time-saving to simply build a sturdier replacement. After assessing your furniture piece and deciding that it's worth saving, develop an action plan. Use these strategies to remedy a variety of problems.

Download the free PDF at https://www.woodcraft.com/blog_entries/restoring-outdoor-projects.

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