



Fresh Home Upgrades for Spring

FAMILY FEATURES

After a long winter cooped up indoors, spring is the perfect time to start re-imagining your home and making upgrades that create a fresh, welcoming vibe. These project ideas – some big, some small – can help breathe new life into your home so you're ready to enjoy your favorite rooms to the fullest.

Air it out

Months of closed windows and doors can make any room feel dusty and stale. As soon as temperatures allow, throw open the windows and skylights to let the fresh air chase away the remnants of winter. It's a perfect time to launder window treatments and clean area rugs. After a few passes with a carpet cleaner, allow rugs to air-dry outdoors. If you're considering an update to the overall decor, changing out these textiles is an easy and affordable way to create a new look. Just donate the used drapes and rugs after cleaning instead of bringing them back into the room.

Shift your outlook

When contemplating changes to a room's aesthetic, most people focus on the floor, walls and elements like furniture and accessories. As some homeowners are discovering, there's a whole other space waiting to be discovered. The ceiling, a fifth wall of sorts, opens up endless creative design opportunities.

Whether you're seeking more natural light, access to fresh air, a sense of spaciousness or a way to bring sophistication to a room, a skylight may be just the solution. For example, Velux room-darkening and light-filtering blinds can add a splash of color just where you least expect it, and they're efficient in shielding your space from the sun, meaning the blinds and installation are

eligible for a 30 percent tax credit. Learn more at whyskylights.com.

Paint to perfection

Over time, once cheerful walls can grow dull. Create a livelier ambiance with a fresh coat of paint, either in the same shade or something completely new. If you're not sure exactly where to start, tackle the project room by room. To choose the right hue, select a favorite item in the room, such as an heirloom throw blanket or a piece of wall art, and consider color shades that complement the item well.

Make what's old new again

Sometimes a fresh perspective is as simple as rearranging a room to better fit your needs. Over time, the furnishings can become almost an afterthought because they've been in place so long. Try moving things around to create new conversation groupings or to highlight a piece that has been tucked away in the shadows. An updated arrangement may inspire to you add and embellish with some simple new accessories or accent pieces for a room that only looks brand new.

Get earth smart

With all of the new growth and hues of green that abound during spring, it's natural to be more mindful of the environment. Earth-friendly upgrades like switching out inefficient lighting or installing low-flow toilets and shower heads can make a sizable difference. Another option for energy conservation: Look for ways to maximize natural light for heat and to brighten rooms. Well-placed windows and skylights can harness energy naturally, so you can minimize your reliance on electricity for comfort and convenience.



5 Ways to Make the Most of Your 5th Wall

- 1. Start with a smooth canvas.** This means eliminating any details like popcorn ceilings or other texturing that may appear dated and dingy.
- 2. Add some color.** Bring character to the room by adding color to the ceiling that complements the traditional walls for a cohesive look. If you have eaves, dormers or other architectural elements, consider painting some and leaving others white for variety and added dimension.
- 3. Introduce natural light.** When it comes from above, natural light brightens a room in a whole new way. An option like a Velux skylight is a sensible solution because it offers plenty of ways to customize the skylight to your specific space and functional needs.
- 4. Enhance with accessories.** Both practical and attractive, blinds are a good idea for a skylight. They let you control the light, such as blocking out harsh rays during the heat of the day but letting the gentle evening light illuminate the room. In addition to choosing a style and color that complements the room decor, also look for features such as remote-control operation and room-darkening textiles.
- 5. Get creative.** Treating your ceiling like a wall opens virtually endless possibilities. Especially if you have some unique architectural features, you can highlight them by adding special touches such as built-in shelves for extra storage or new place to nurture lush house plants.