

## The Right Plant for the Right Spot

When selecting plants, choose varieties that can thrive in your garden's environment.

**Choose Perennials** for your outdoor garden. They do cost more but they will save you money in the long-run because they return every year.

**Know your zone.** You must know what zone you are in, in order to choose what types of plants will grow in your area. Also, if your area doesn't receive a lot of rain, buy a plant that is drought tolerant.

**Resist exotic specimens** that need coddling. Hardy plants that are native to your area will perform more reliably.

**Avoid spraying** by choosing disease-resistant varieties.

### Light Requirements

Instead of groaning about limited light in your garden, celebrate the perks of shade: slower-growing weeds, fewer pests, less need to water, and cooler temperatures. Any area that receives less than six hours of direct sun a day is considered shady.

These categories will help you select the right plants for the shady spots in your garden:

**Partial shade.** Receives direct sun in the morning or afternoon, or lightly dappled sunlight all day. This is the lightest form of shade in gardens.

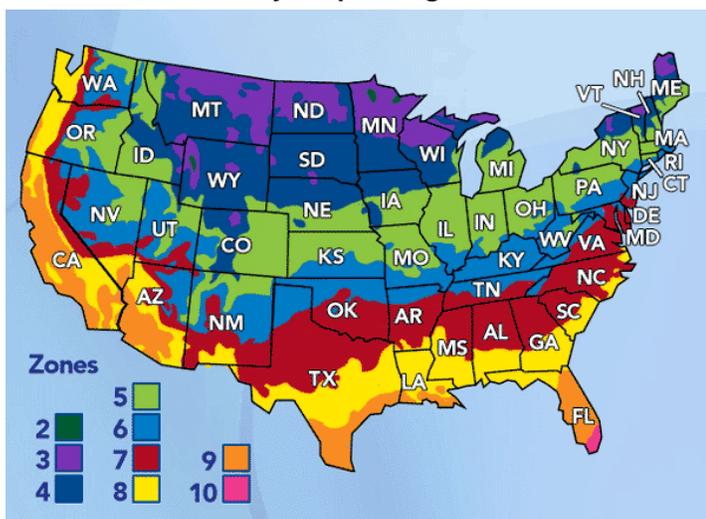
**Light shade.** Receives an hour or two of full sun during the day and supports a wide variety of plants.

**Half shade.** Shaded for four or five of the brightest daylight hours. Gardens with no direct sun but lots of reflected sunlight also fall in this category.

**Full shade.** No direct sun. Found under mature trees with large leaves and a dense, wide canopy, such as maples and oaks.

**Heavy shade.** Deep, cool shadows cast by evergreen trees or tall buildings. Not many plants can grow in heavy shade unless they receive some reflected sunlight.

### Find your planting zone



**Red Hot Poker**  
Drought Tolerant



**Lilly of the Valley**  
Grows in partial shade

To find a complete plant encyclopedia visit:

[www.http://www.bhg.com/bhg/plantfinder/index.jhtml?psrc=bob:ac1:garden](http://www.bhg.com/bhg/plantfinder/index.jhtml?psrc=bob:ac1:garden)



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# Tiling an Entryway

## About this Project

Most professional tilesetters agree that the best substrate for tile is an old-fashioned mortar bed. But laying it smooth is a job for the pros. Backerboard has made it easier for do-it-yourselfers to install their own tile. There are times, though, when backerboard won't work. This is often the case when you cannot afford to raise the height of the finish floor too much. Entryways frequently post this dilemma, because the floor connects with several rooms and often a stairway as well. In those situations, a modified mortar-bed installation is best.

## Time

2 - 4 days, depending on the size of the entryway and the amount of preparation needed for the subfloor. Allow time for cement to cure.

## Skills

Troweling cement to a consistent thickness; preparing a subfloor; tiling a floor.

## Tools

Steel trowel.

### 1. Prepare floor

Stabilize any spongy areas of the floor using drywall screws twice as long as the thickness of your flooring. If necessary, add plywood so your subfloor totals at least 1-1/8 inch in thickness. Install 15-pound felt roofing paper overlapping the edges 2 to 3 inches, and staple the paper to the subfloor every 6 to 8 inches. After stapling, trim the edges so the felt doesn't ride up any adjacent molding or stairs.



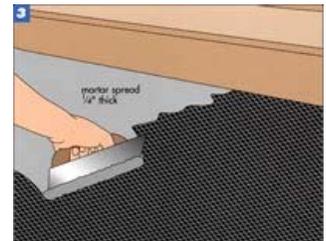
### 2. Attach metal lath

Staple galvanized metal lath (mesh) over the felt paper. Available at masonry-supply stores and large home centers in 2-foot-wide strips, the lath can be cut with tin snips. Butt the pieces together; don't overlap them.



### 3. Spread the mortar

Prepare a cement mixture of half portland cement and half fine (builders) sand. The fine sand should not contain stones that would make the surface bumpy. Spread cement with a steel trowel to a depth of 1/4 inch, smoothing all ridges. Avoid smearing mortar on stair riser or adjacent molding.



### 4. Smooth the surface

Let the mortar cure overnight. Then carefully go over the cement with a trowel to scrape away any high spots. Sweep it to remove any loose material.

### 5. Lay out and set tiles

An entryway can be difficult to lay out, because different parts of the floor are visible from different directions. Choose the most public point of view and plan your layout around it. Dry fit the tiles to ensure there won't be any slivers of tile.

### 6. Grout and seal

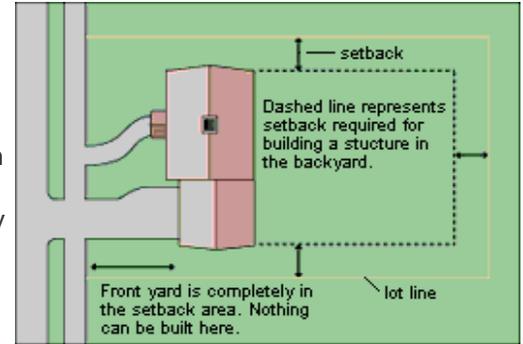
If the tiles were not sealed when you bought them, apply the sealer recommended by the tile maker before grouting. After the tiles are set and grouted, wait about a week before applying a liquid topcoat, which should be renewed once or twice a year.



## Planning a deck

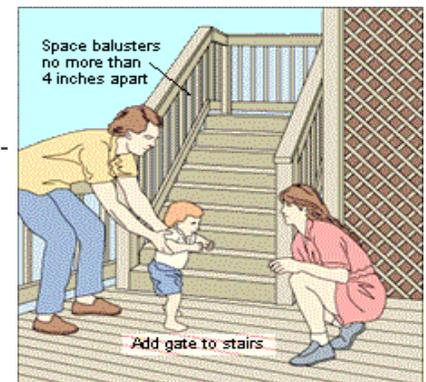
### 1. Keep it legal

Like most major home improvements, a deck addition must be done in compliance with local building codes and zoning laws. Submit plans to your town or county building department for approval and to obtain a building permit. Depending on its policies, the building department also may require inspections to make sure you're following the approved plans. This legal supervision ensures that your design will be built properly. Remember, building codes prevent your neighbors from doing things you might not like. Failing to comply with codes could result in having to remove what you've built. Not everyone is covered by zoning laws or required to get a building permit. But it's up to you, not the authorities, to find out what laws cover your project.



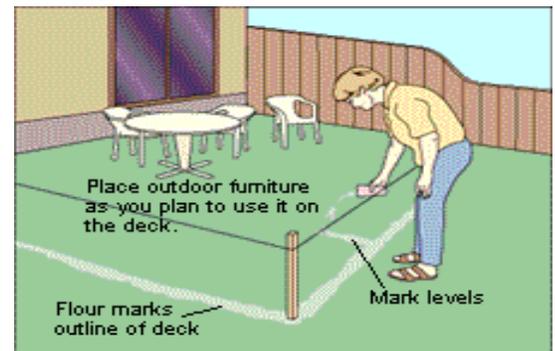
### 2. Play it safe

The elements that make decks useful, fun, and good-looking, such as stairways, railings, multiple levels, hot tubs, or high elevations, also create safety hazards. Complying with local building codes doesn't guarantee a safe deck. Legal requirements represent minimal standards; your situation may demand more. Minimize risks by observing these precautions.



### 3. Make a trial run

Mark the perimeter of your deck and its various levels with flour. Place your lawn furniture inside the perimeter to get a feel for how much space you need. Use strings to indicate railing heights. Set the string lines at the height of the proposed deck to give you a sense of its profile.



For step-by-step instructions on how to construct your deck visit [www.http://www.bhg.com/bhg/category.jhtml?categoryid=/templatedata/bhg/category/data/Hie\\_Outside\\_Decks.xml](http://www.bhg.com/bhg/category.jhtml?categoryid=/templatedata/bhg/category/data/Hie_Outside_Decks.xml).



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# Installing a Flagstone Walkway

## About this Project

For a casual walkway that looks as if it has been in place for years, consider a flagstone path. The seasoned look is achieved by leaving sod between the stones. As with any masonry materials set directly into the soil, these stones will settle with time and have to be reset every few years. Begin by laying out the path. Lay a charged hose (close the nozzle and turn on the water) in the pattern you want. Pour flour or sand on it to establish outlines.

## Time

Several hours to install about 50 square feet of flagstone.

## Skills

No special skills needed.

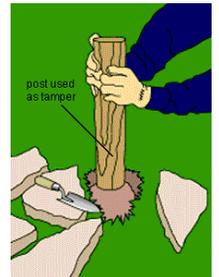
### 1. Lay out the Flagstones

Following the outline for your path, lay the stones directly on the ground. Turn them in different directions and try different stones, until you come up with a pattern with fairly consistent joint lines that are about 1-1/2 inches wide. Combine large and small stones as you lay out the pattern. If you need to cut a stone, use a baby sledgehammer and brick set to etch a 1/8-inch-deep line on both sides of the stone. Support the stone along the cut line and strike the waste side until it breaks. Slice the sod around the first stone.



### 2. Excavate and Stamp

Move the stone away. Dig out the sod, being careful to preserve the sod between the stones. Remove roots or stones that might make it difficult to set the stone level. Fill the hole with soil or sand as necessary and tamp it firmly.



### 3. Place the stone

If a stone rocks or wobbles when you step on it, take it out and note the pattern of indentations made in the ground. Add soil to the places where the stone did not rest on the soil or dig away places where the stone made a heavy indentation mark. Replace the stone. After all the stones are in place, give the path a good soaking with a fine spray of water.



# Patching Large Holes in Drywall

## About this project

Use these techniques for holes in drywall that are more than 3 inches across. Alternatively, for holes up to about 8-inches across, purchase a large repair patch at a hardware store or home center. The patch is a mesh panel with self-adhesive edges that hold it in place. The panel bridges the hole and serves as a base for the joint compound.

## Time

30 minutes of actual work, plus drying time.

## Skills

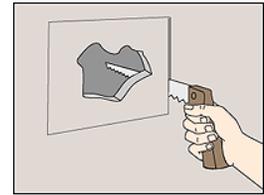
Basic to intermediate skills, particularly if you need to tape the repair.

## Tools

Taping knives, keyhole saw or drywall saw, hammer, drill, utility knife, sanding block or sponge, paintbrush

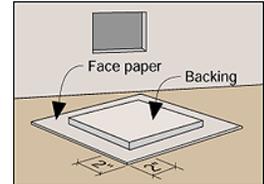
### 1. Cut around damage

For holes up to 8 inches, mark a rectangle and cut it out with a keyhole saw.



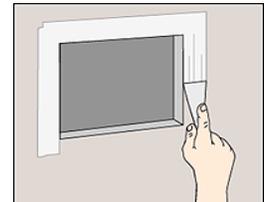
### 2. Fashion a patch

Cut a drywall rectangle 2 inches larger than the hole. Remove 2-inch perimeter, but leaving facing paper.



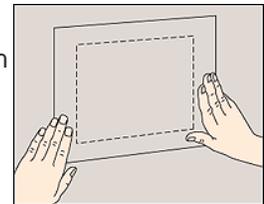
### 3. Apply Compound

Spread compound around the damaged area. Also, butter its inside edges to serve as an adhesive.



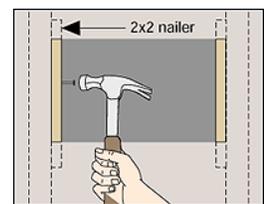
### 4. Insert patch

Insert patch, smooth down, and hold in place for a few minutes. Blend in by feathering with



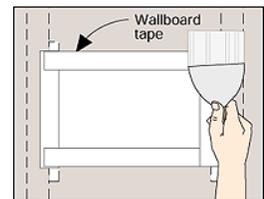
### 5. Using studs for support

For larger holes, cut area to centers of adjoining studs. Toenail 2x2s to top and bottom to use as nailers.



### 6. Finish

Nail or screw in patch, tape, and smooth. You'll need three coats of compound for a good job. Sand, smooth, then prime and paint.



## Install a ceiling fan

Before beginning the installation, make sure the power to the receptacle is turned off at the main switch box.

1. **Remove** the old light bracket, and replace it with the new ceiling-fan bracket.



2. **Assemble** the fan body, canopy and the support rod assembly. The down-rod attaches to the motor, and sets in place using secure pins and set screws.



3. **Lift and connect.** Lift the assembly over the open side of the bracket and set it in place. Make the electrical connections, wiring the fan to the receiver. If you're not comfortable doing electrical wiring, don't hesitate to call in an electrician to help you with this.



4. **Raise the canopy** up to the ceiling to cover the receiver and wires and fasten it with screws. Assemble the blades and blade carriers. The blades simply attach to their brackets with screws. Mount the blades to the bottom of the motor



5. **Install light fixture** to the switch housing. The manufacturer of the fan will provide specific instructions for the electrical wiring.



6. **Secure.** Finally, lift the light fixture into place, and secure it to the motor assembly. Turn the power back on, and cool off.



**Experts** say a ceiling fan can save up to 40 percent on your summer cooling costs, and up to 10 percent during the winter heating season. In summer, ceiling fans cool the room by creating a "wind chill effect." For example, if you had a ceiling fan in a room that was 85 degrees, the fan would make the room feel like 78 degrees. During colder weather, by using the 'reverse' setting the ceiling fan saves energy by circulating hot air that rises to the ceiling and blowing it back down into the room.



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## Refinishing Wood Floors

Refinishing a wood floor is a job that takes care and patience. You'll need to rent a random-orbital sander or upright drum sander and a disc-type edge sander. A sander that uses 220 volts will work much better than a standard 120-volt machine.

Sanding a floor with a drum sander requires concentration and smooth movements. If you allow the sander to dig into the floor, it will create an unsightly dip. For floors without heavy finish buildup or deep scratches, an upright random-orbital sander (also called a jitterbug sander) is a better choice. It doesn't work as fast as a drum sander but is less likely to damage the floor. If only the finish is damaged and you do not need to remove deep scratches, consider "screening" rather than sanding. Rent a janitor's buffing machine, and buy circular screens to fit.

Do this work on a day when you can open doors and windows to let out the dust. Wear a respirator to contend with fine dust, and seal off adjoining rooms with dampened sheets.

### Time

6 to 8 hours over 2 days for a 10-x-12-foot room. Allow an additional 2 to 4 days for applying the finish.

### Skills

Basic carpentry skills.

### Tools

Hammer, nail set, drum or random-orbital sander, disc-type edge sander, paint scraper or chisel, vacuum, tack cloth, putty knife, and paintbrush or wax applicator.

#### **1. Remove the base shoe.**

After you have removed the furnishings, pry off the baseboard shoe molding -- the piece at the very bottom. If there is no shoe, remove the baseboard itself. If the pieces are in good shape, number them on the back so you can reinstall them. Otherwise plan to install new molding.



#### **2. Set popped nails.**

Any protruding metal will quickly rip up a sanding disc or belt. Use a nail set to drive any popped nails below the surface.



#### **3. Sand the main floor.**

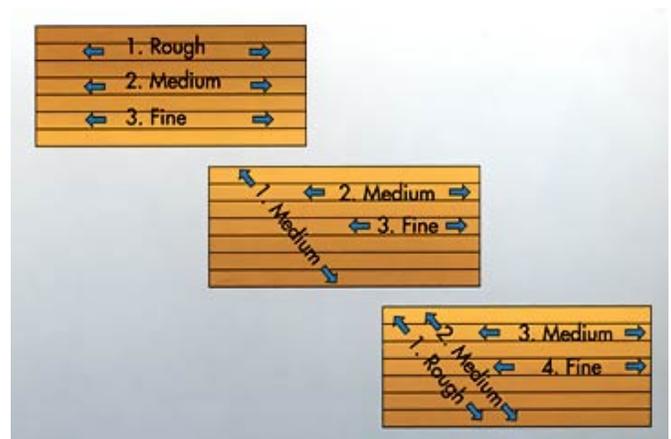
Make the first cut with coarse-grit sandpaper. Use coarse grit until you reach bare wood and most of the scratches have disappeared. With a jitterbug sander you don't have to follow the grain of the wood. Use medium- and fine-grit sandpaper for the next two cuts. At each stage expect to use several sheets of sandpaper on each of the four oscillating heads.



### Using a Drum Sander

Getting nowhere sanding with the grain? Try one diagonal pass, but never sand directly across the grain. Finish up by sanding with the grain.

Badly cupped or warped old floors may require four cuts -- two diagonal passes and two with the grain. Be sure to always overlap each pass.



#### 4. Sand the edges of the floor.

Use an edge sander for hard-to-reach areas. Work slowly, and finish with a very fine sandpaper so the circular lines will not be visible. In corners that the sander cannot reach, use a sharp paint scraper or chisel, always working with the grain.



#### 5. Remove dust with a tack cloth.

After each sanding pass, vacuum the floor thoroughly. Use a tack cloth after the last vacuuming to pick up the remaining dust.



#### 6. Apply a filler.

Fill in any holes and gaps between the boards using paste wood filler. Apply it first with a putty knife. Always work with the grain. When the filler begins to set, wipe across the grain with an old rag to remove excess. Let the filler dry overnight.



#### 7. Finish with polyurethane.

Apply two to four coats of polyurethane finish with a brush or a wax applicator, sanding with fine sandpaper between coats. Use a tack cloth to pick up all the dust between coats. Do not apply wax over a polyurethane finish.



## Keep Your Carpet Looking Its Best

Clean carpets can add sparkle and freshness to your entire home. Your cleaning options are more varied than you might think. Here's a quick rundown.

- **It's all wet.** Most home cleaning systems are water extraction units (also called steam cleaners), that inject a solution into the pile. The dirty solution is then pulled back into the machine. To avoid the hassle of dragging a hose around the house, opt for models that do not require a clean water hookup. Also, choose machines with the most powerful motors to ease extraction. When using a steamer, do not overwet the carpets. Overwetting can damage the carpet backing and underlayment causing shrinkage, discoloration, and odor.
- **The dry approach.** Other home cleaning systems use the dry extraction method. These machines require spreading a dry absorbent compound over the carpets before vacuuming with the cleaning machine. Although they usually work better than home steamers, dry machines and chemicals are more expensive than steamers and wet extraction solutions.
- **Arrange a rental.** Most grocery stores and rental centers rent professional-quality wet extraction cleaners that are more powerful than home units. At about \$20 for a rental, plus the cost of cleaning solutions (shampoo, defoamer, spot removers, odor removers, etc.), rental machines can quickly become pricey.



*All information was provided by [www.bhg.com](http://www.bhg.com)*