



# your

# HOME



Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

## Planning for an Outdoor Kitchen

**C**onstructing an outdoor kitchen in your backyard can transform your home, creating a vibrant space for cooking, entertaining and enjoying the great outdoors. However, successful execution requires careful planning and consideration of several key factors.

**Location:** Your outdoor kitchen should be situated in a spot that balances accessibility with convenience. Ideally, it should be near your indoor kitchen to streamline food preparation and cleanup. Consider wind patterns and sun exposure to ensure comfort for all.

**Layout and size:** Determine your available space and needs. A basic setup might include a grill, countertop and sink, while more elaborate designs incorporate refrigerators, bars and dining areas. Plan for ample counter space for food prep and serving.

**Materials:** Ensure your outdoor kitchen's materials are durable and weather resistant. Stainless steel appliances, stone countertops and brick or concrete structures are popular choices that withstand the elements while maintaining a pleasing look.

**Utilities:** Gas, water and electricity access are crucial for an outdoor kitchen's functionality. Professional installation is recommended to



ensure safety and compliance with local codes.

**Budget:** Always have a financial plan before you begin any work. Determine your must-haves

versus nice-to-haves to allocate your funds wisely, keeping in mind that a well-designed outdoor kitchen can significantly enhance your home's value.

## Choosing a New Showerhead

Choosing the right showerhead is paramount for the ultimate shower experience. This decision elevates your daily routine and adds a layer of luxury to your bathroom. Below are five of the most popular types of showerheads, chosen for their combination of aesthetic appeal and functional benefits.

**1 Rain showerheads:** These simulate the gentle fall of rain, offering a soothing, spa-like experience with full coverage and even distribution of water, transforming your shower into a glorious, tranquil escape.

**2 Handheld showerheads:** Known for their flexibility, handheld

showerheads come with a hose, allowing for targeted cleaning. They cater to a diverse range of needs, from washing your back to rinsing a child's hair, making them ideal for families.

**3 Dual showerheads:** Combining a fixed and a handheld unit, dual showerheads provide versatility and

convenience, ensuring that all household members' preferences are met.

**4 Low-flow showerheads:** Eco-friendly homeowners prefer low-flow models, which conserve water without compromising pressure. These showerheads are beneficial for the

environment and your wallet.

**5 High-pressure showerheads:** Designed to enhance water pressure, high-pressure showerheads offer an invigorating shower experience, ensuring efficient rinsing and a refreshing start to the day.



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# Driveway and Sidewalk Crack Repair

**D**riveway and sidewalk cracks detract from your home's curb appeal and pose safety hazards. Fortunately, homeowners can tackle these repairs with the right approach and materials, ensuring effectiveness and safety. Here's how to address these common issues confidently.

- 1 ASSESS THE DAMAGE:** Begin by evaluating the extent of the cracks. Small hairline cracks can often be easily filled, while larger cracks may require more extensive repairs. Understanding the severity of the damage will help you choose the appropriate repair method.
- 2 CLEAN THE AREA:** Before any repair, thoroughly clean the crack and surrounding area. Remove debris, dirt and weeds to ensure the repair materials adhere properly. A wire brush, followed by a leaf blower or a good sweep, can help.

- 3 CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE MATERIAL:** A simple concrete caulk or liquid filler can be sufficient for small cracks. Larger cracks may require a concrete patch mix. Products are available that are specifically designed for outdoor surfaces, offering durability and flexibility to accommodate expansions and contractions caused by fluctuating temperatures.
- 4 APPLY THE REPAIR MATERIAL:** Read the label and follow the product instructions carefully before starting the repair. A caulking gun may be necessary for caulks and

- fillers to ensure the material penetrates the entire depth of the crack. When using a patch mix, pressing the material firmly into the crack and smoothing it with a trowel will ensure a level surface.
- 5 ALLOW IT TO DRY:** Allow the repair material to dry and cure as recommended before using the driveway or sidewalk. This can vary from a few hours to several days, so patience is important.
- 6 TAKE PROPER PRECAUTION:** Wear appropriate safety gear, including gloves and eye protection, to avoid injury. Keep children and pets away from the repair area until fully cured.

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