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Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

How to Re-caulk Your Bathroom

Re-caulking your bathroom is an essential maintenance task that not only enhances the appearance of your bathroom but also prevents potential water damage. Over time, old caulk can become moldy, cracked or start to peel away, leaving your bathroom vulnerable to moisture. Here's a simple guide on how to effectively re-caulk your bathroom to ensure a watertight seal.

STEP 1 Remove the old caulk
First, remove the old caulk around your bathtub, shower, sink and toilet base. Use a caulk removal tool or a utility knife to cut through and peel away the old material while being careful not to scratch the surfaces. After removal, clean the area thoroughly with a mold-killing cleaner or a solution of bleach and water to remove any mold and residue. Allow the area to dry completely, as moisture can prevent new caulk from adhering properly.

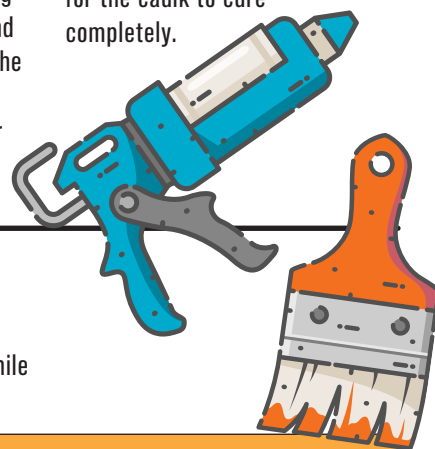
STEP 2 Tape the area
For a clean, professional

finish, apply painter's tape along the edges where you will be applying the new caulk. This ensures straight lines and prevents the caulk from spreading onto adjacent surfaces.

STEP 3 Apply the new caulk
Choose a silicone-based caulk for bathrooms due to its mold-resistant and waterproof properties. Cut the tip of the caulk tube at a 45-degree angle. Using a caulking gun, apply the caulk smoothly and evenly along the seam. Smooth the caulk line with a caulking tool or your finger dipped in soapy water to press the caulk into the joint.

STEP 4 Remove the tape
Once the caulk is applied and smoothed, promptly remove the painter's tape before the caulk starts to dry to ensure sharp lines.

STEP 5 Let the caulk dry
Follow the manufacturer's instructions regarding drying time before using the shower or bath. Typically, it takes about 24 hours for the caulk to cure completely.



Painting the Exterior of Your Home

Painting the exterior of your home not only boosts its curb appeal but also serves as a critical layer of protection against the elements. Some handy homeowners may want to do the painting themselves, while others may prefer to hire a vendor to take on the job. Here are some tips for both options.

Painting yourself

- ▶ **Be prepared:** Before painting, thoroughly inspect the exterior for any signs of damage, such as cracks, rot or mold. Address these issues promptly. Clean the surfaces by power washing to remove dirt, debris and old flaking paint. This ensures a smooth, clean surface to help the new paint adhere better and last longer.
- ▶ **Choose the right paint:** Opt for high-quality exterior paint that can withstand local climate conditions. The right

- sheen (glossy or matte) can also affect durability and the final look. A satin finish, for instance, is often recommended for siding as it hides imperfections and cleans easily.
- ▶ **Applying the paint:** Use a primer first if you're making a significant color change or painting over bare wood. When applying paint, work from top to bottom in controlled strokes, overlapping slightly to avoid streaks.

Hiring a vendor

- ▶ **Do your research:** Look for vendors with strong reputations, positive reviews and a track record of quality work.
- ▶ **Get an estimate:** Get detailed estimates from at least three contractors. The quote should include costs for materials, labor and the number of coats.
- ▶ **Check licenses and insurance:** Ensure the vendor is licensed and insured to protect against potential damage or accidents.

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Choosing a New Kitchen Faucet

Selecting a new kitchen faucet is a seemingly small decision that can have a big impact on the functionality and appearance of your kitchen. Whether you're renovating your kitchen or simply looking to replace an outdated faucet, selecting the right model requires careful consideration of several key factors.



Design and functionality: Start by determining the style that best complements your kitchen's decor. Faucets come in various styles, including modern, industrial and traditional. Additionally, consider how you use your kitchen. Do you cook frequently? A pull-down faucet with a high arc might be beneficial for filling large pots and providing greater sink access.

Finish: Faucets are available in numerous finishes, such as chrome, stainless steel, brushed nickel and matte black. Each offers distinct advantages in terms of durability and ease of maintenance. Stainless steel and chrome are prized for their durability and easy cleaning, while matte finishes hide water spots and fingerprints better.

Features: Modern faucets can include a variety of features, including touchless operation, built-in water filtration systems and temperature indicators. Assess which features will enhance or ease your kitchen routine.

Installation and compatibility: Check your sink's configuration to determine how many holes are available for installation. This affects the type of faucet you can install unless you're willing to modify your countertop or sink.

Budget: Set a budget before shopping. While it's tempting to go for the cheapest option, investing in a high-quality faucet can save money in the long run due to better durability and improved features.

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