



GREENER HOME HINTS

*Tips & ideas on a greener
way to do it yourself*

A GREENER WAY TO DO IT YOURSELF

Do you love decorating your home but hate creating waste? Do you love having unique items and being creative? Do you hate buying or using products that are hazardous or contain lots of chemicals?

If you answered yes to any of these questions then please read this guide as it's designed to help you DIY around the home but not at the expense of the environment.



Before you begin...

Try to be objective when deciding what to keep or discard. Shabby and tired looking household items can be revitalised with paint, varnish or new textiles. Often at a fraction of the price of purchasing something new.

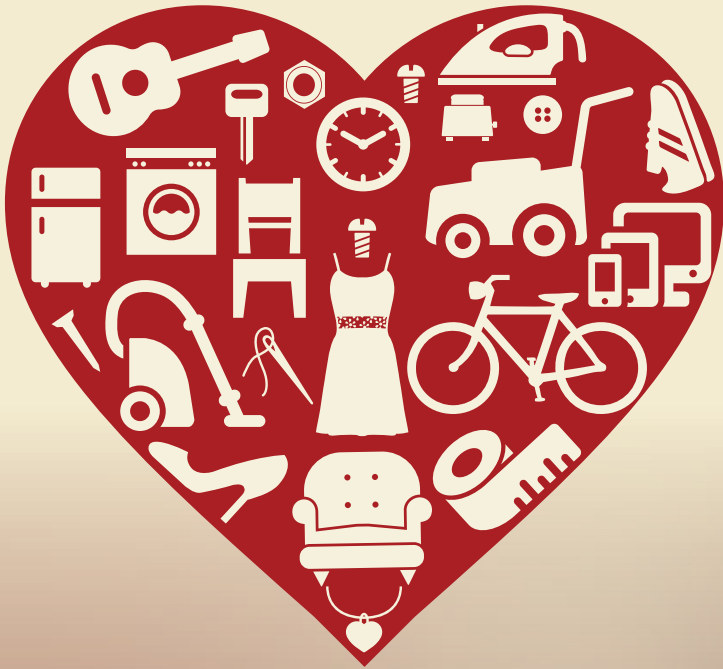
Before you even contemplate throwing things away do an internet search to get inspiration. Sites such as Pinterest or Etsy are wonderful resources—as is your local library which has dozens of decorating books, periodicals and magazines on the subject.

Planning a DIY Project:

First get a sketchbook and list all the items you already have and scope out ideas on what you could do with these:

Item	Upcycle	Repair	Donate	Discard
Coffee table		X		
Light Fitting	X			
Chair			X	
Bird Bath				X

Allow yourself to think outside the box. Create a "mood board" by cutting out ideas from magazines. Try to visualise the items you already have in a new improved setting, this way you may not need to replace many items, so you will save money, prevent waste and unleash creative talent you didn't know you already had.



Repairing is Caring!

Broken items can be repaired? Using local repair services can save you money and time and helps to support the local economy.

**Currently there are Repair Directories for
Carlow, Kilkenny, Limerick, Waterford & Wexford**

ARE YOU A Paint Squirrel

Open any shed, garage or utility room cupboard and you will most likely find unused paint. It's a common problem because we buy too much or think it's a good idea to hold on to paint in order "to touch" up a room. This however rarely happens instead we end up repainting and eventually discarding the leftover paint. Here is some helpful advice worth reading before you go to the paint shop:

BEFORE YOU BUY

Paints, varnishes and stains are essential DIY products intrinsic to all aspects of DIY. Painting a room can transform it, instantly creating light and warmth. For most of us we never think about paint before we go to buy it, instead we make our decisions based on what is available in the local store. Before you embark on your next paint job why not:



- Do some research on the different types of paint available so you know more about the type of paint most suitable to the job in hand. For example if you are painting a playroom you need a durable paint that withstand high volumes of traffic and is easily washable.
- Look for paints with low VOC emissions (fewer chemicals were used to manufacture them) as these are better for the environment.
- Look for "Breathe Easy" or low odour paints as you will find these more comfortable to use.
- Where possible choose water based paint. It's also less harmful to the environment and the containers can be disposed of in the general waste.

How much paint do I need? It's a question that plagues every DIY enthusiast. The square metre coverage is usually on each paint can. So before you buy, use a **paint calculator** to find out exactly how much paint you'll need to makeover your space. Measure the height and width of every wall and multiply to get square metres.



You will find paint calculators on a number of websites. These are easy to use:

Crown Paints, Dulux Paint, DIY.com, www.colortrend.ie, Weathershield, Dulux Paint, Valspar Paint, Johnstones Paint, Mcconnells Paints.

Familiarise yourself with the symbols on paint cans:



If your paint tins have any of these labels - then your paint is going to be a hazardous waste.

rel?



Paint Squirrel | noun |
An individual with more than 5 unused paint cans gathering dust in storage.

WHEN YOU BUY

Don't be intimidated ask for help, remember you need to get the right paint for the right job and staff are well trained at giving advice (even to novices that are unsure where to start!). Some hardware & DIY stores have special Paint Information days these are a great opportunity to learn more about different paints on the market.

Choose good quality paint for more durability it will pay off over time as its less likely to need repainting as often.

Unsure about your new colour scheme? Match pots are a really good idea to help prevent you from making a costly mistake.

If you are using an in-store paint making service, don't overbuy—the colour can still be matched for a second batch.

If at all possible purchase quality brushes and roller sets. If looked after properly they are an investment and they may make the job easier to do. Cheap accessories don't tend to last and can often end up costing more if they break and need to be replaced.

BEFORE YOU PAINT

Tedious as it may seem preparing the surfaces is essential to getting the job done efficiently. Painting over dirty surfaces will use more paint costing you more money overall and if you paint over dirty or oily surfaces the paint will chip and peel off so you end up wasting paint, time and effort. So take time to thoroughly clean & prepare the surfaces before you start.

Make life easier and prevent damage to existing floors and furniture by covering them before you paint. Use cloths rather than plastic to cover the floors and furniture, cloths can be reused over & over again. If necessary the cloths can be washed but this isn't essential just fold up and store away till the next job.

AFTER YOU PAINT

- Did you know you can return unused unopened paint to the store for a refund?
- Wash and dry accessories and store safely away
- Got left over paint? Did you know most local authorities operate **Paint Reuse** Initiatives where left over paint can be donated for use by community groups.
- Check your local authority website or ask at the recycling centre.

Handy tips...



Cover door handles and other fittings with & tinfoil to avoid drippage.



Cover paint tray in tinfoil and save water on cleaning.

TO RECYCLE OR *Up Cycle?*

Before you discard anything or rush out to shops to replace or purchase new goods, why not take some time and do a little research. You could be pleasantly surprised to find out that YOU can transform tired and shabby household goods and furniture easily and cheaply, having plenty of fun along the way.

The quickest way of learning about DIY and upcycling is by doing an internet search but here is some inspiration to get you started:



USEFUL DIY SITES

snapguide.com
www.instructables.com
www.diynetwork.com
www.diy.ie



APPLIANCE PAINT

Did you know you can buy paints to change the colour of appliances? These paints can also be used to touch up scratched white goods. There are dozens of Youtube videos to help you choose and apply the right product. Painting a shabby white appliance in a bright colour can completely transform a utility room or kitchen.

SIMPLE UPHOLSTERY

By investing in a glue gun and fabric stapler you can replace stool and chair pads, pelmets and other simple upholstery tasks.





FURNITURE PAINTS

Have become very popular in recent years and are an excellent way to add colour and bring old fashioned items up to date. There are lots of different ideas to try out as well as products on the market to transform all types of furniture from laminate to solid wood.

YOU CAN DO IT!

Make your own blinds and cushions using unusual fabrics such as old denim jeans, curtain fabric for throws and cushions. Get inspiration alongside simple ideas online that only require velcro and fabric glue so you don't need to be able to sew or have a sewing machine.



Still not convinced you can transform your living space? Maybe you simply don't have enough spare time to take on a creative project?

If you would still prefer to keep what you have but think it needs a bit of improvement why not check out local refurbishment and upcycling opportunities in your local area?

The Community Reuse Network Ireland (CRNI) is a great starting point with contact details for a whole host of creative businesses that upcycle and refurbish household goods, textiles and furniture. www.crni.ie



IT'S HAPPENING NEAR YOU!

Also check out your night classes and local lifestyle stores for workshops classes on crafts, DIY know-how and interior design.





BUYING TOOLS

Buying tools can make DIY expensive especially if you are new to it. Here is some handy advice to save money and help you avoid fewer mistakes too.

Quality Tools



A quality tool is likely to last longer saving you money over time

A cheap fix?



Poor quality fixings such as screws can actually be harder to work with and waste time

If you buy it, use it!



Power tool batteries left idle for long periods will eventually die and these are costly to replace

Safety first!



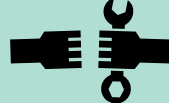
Before you start any job value your health & safety and get the appropriate safety wear

Purchasing tools online?



Purchasing tools online might save money but it's not so great for aftersales service & advice

Second hand tools



A great way to save but be sure to get advice from a tradesperson before you buy

Correct Storage



Store your tools correctly by keeping them in a safe dry and well organised space

Tool care



Fix any damaged tools as soon as possible to avoid buying a new one

Borrowing tools



Why not see if your local Men's Shed would be interested in setting up a "Tool Library"?

Essential tools to have

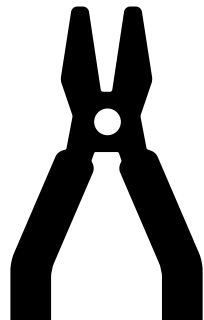


Measuring tape, a philips and flathead screwdriver and a hammer

Get Advice



Ask for advice at the trade counter and get the right tool for the right job





HAVE WE REACHED PEAK STUFF?

Do you ever stop and wonder why do we have so much stuff and more importantly does any of it make us happy?

Early in 2016 there was lots of media coverage about consumerism and happiness in the 21st century. One side of the debate argues that buying stuff does not make us happy and fulfilled, instead genuine pleasure and a sense of contentment is found in undertaking projects or by having new experiences. Perhaps that explains the popularity of DIY, home improvements and other interests like cookery and baking.

Consumerism remains a major environmental concern—many natural resources are depleting rapidly and those still available are harder to extract causing even greater environmental damage.

Even if your lifestyle hasn't reached "peak stuff" yet, you can still play your part and reduce your impact on the environment. Even small individual changes add up to make a collective difference.

Here's a few simple changes you could consider:

- Buy local goods and services—this reduces the environmental impact of transport and supports the local economy;
- Where possible buy durable goods and ask before you buy about durability and repairability.
- You don't always need to buy something new. Check out pre-loved, vintage, 2nd hand and charity shop options. Giving products a longer lifespan rather than discarding or recycling them is one of the soundest environmental options available.

WHEN TO NOT-DO-IT YOURSELF!

You need to know the limits of what you can and can't do. Your best intentions could end up costing you a fortune or causing a serious injury to you or others. Sometimes it's best to hire in a professional. Here is some helpful advise.

SAFETY FIRST

If you think there is **risk involved** in a certain job ask yourself these questions:

- Do I have the correct tools?
- Do I have the necessary safety gear?
- Do I have the certified training/qualifications to complete the work and safely?

If you said no to any of the above, then DO NOT DIY!

COSTS

Time is money, so even if you know you can paint the whole house, do you have the time to do it? You have to weigh up the cost of hiring a professional against how much time you can give over to a project.

KNOWLEDGE

Not knowing how to do something should never be an excuse not to do it, after all that's the satisfaction to be got from DIY. But it might be wise to do a bit of research before taking on that big upholstery or remodelling job. Projects can vary, don't be afraid to get advice from a professional.



Unless you're a professional here are a few jobs you should NOT-DO-IT-YOURSELF

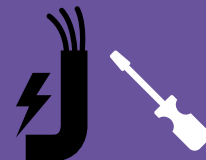
Cutting down trees, or even removing branches requires climbing and working with dangerous tools from a high distance off the ground.



Knocking down walls might seem like a simple task, but behind walls could be wiring, gas pipes and plumbing that can cause huge problems.



Electrical work is a no-go area. No matter how simple or small the job might look NEVER attempt to repair faulty wiring. Always use a qualified electrician.



Roof work is very risky one could easily lose their footing and slip but it can also be detrimental to your home's structure



TIME TO DOWN TOOLS AND TIDY UP!



Not sure what materials you can bin after a project? Here's some good advice...



**ADHESIVES, RESINS,
VARNISHES &
OIL BASED PAINT**

Bring to your Civic Amenity Centre or look out for the Free Household Hazardous Waste Collection days



**RUBBLE, SLATE,
PLASTER & CEMENT**

Bring all C&D (Construction and Demolition) waste to your Civic Amenity Centre



**UNTREATED WOOD,
TIMBER & GARDEN WASTE**

Bring to your Civic Amenity Centre



TOOLS

Free WEEE collection at point of sale or bring to your Civic Amenity Centre



OLD WORKWEAR

Cut into rags & use for cleaning - paint splattered clothing can't be recycled so dispose of these in your wheelie bin



**EMPTY EMULSION,
PAINT TUBS**

All water based empty paint containers can be disposed of in your wheelie bin.



SOFT FURNISHINGS

Soft furnishings such as curtains, throws and cushions can be donated to charity shops & social enterprises



DISPOSING A MATTRESS?

Find out more about mattress recycling and participating outlets on www.boomerangenterprises.ie



OLD FURNITURE

Don't put old furniture in a skip - instead donate to charity or find out more about furniture upcycling outlets.



www.southernwasteregion.ie

Southern Region Waste Management Office,
Lissanalta House, Dooradoyle, Co. Limerick.
Phone: 061 496 596 | E-mail: info@srwmo.ie | [@preventwaste](https://twitter.com/preventwaste)

