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How to make outdoor living spaces



more comfortable

Private backyards are now go-to spaces for recreation and entertainment and great places to recharge the body and mind.

One ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic was more time spent outdoors, even if it was predominantly on one's own property. OnePoll, in conjunction with the lawn care company TruGreen, surveyed 2,000 American homeowners and found participants spent 14 hours outside every week in 2021, which was three hours more than prior to the pandemic. In addition, respondents admitted that time spent outdoors was therapeutic.

A separate survey conducted for the International Casual Furnishings Association found that people now spend more time relaxing, gardening, exercising, dining, and entertaining outside than in years past. Though COVID-19 may no longer dominate headlines, the desire to enjoy outdoor spaces has not waned.

While enjoying outdoor living areas, homeowners can do all they can to make these spaces comfortable and welcoming.

The following are some good starting points.

Get all lit up

Outdoor spaces can be enjoyed no matter the hour when there is ample lighting. That could be why the International Casual Furnishings Association reports those who plan to renovate their outdoor spaces list outdoor lighting as a priority. Outdoor lighting not only sheds light on entertaining spaces, but also makes spaces safer and more secure.

Increase privacy

No matter how friendly homeowners are with their neighbors, there comes a time when privacy is paramount. Fencing, whether it is wood or vinyl, or even a natural fence made from closely planted hedges, can ensure residents feel comfortable venturing outdoors to swim, take a cat nap or even star gaze in private.

Address the elements

Homeowners should note the direction

their backyard faces and the typical daily conditions of the space. For example, a yard that faces southwest may get plenty of strong sun during the day, requiring the addition of shade trees, covered patios or arbors to cut down on the glare and heat. If the yard is often hit by winds, trees or bushes planted strategically as windbreaks can help.

Sit comfortably

High-quality comfortable seating increases the likelihood that homeowners will want to stay awhile in their outdoor spaces. A deep seating set complete with plush chairs, outdoor sofa or love seat and chaise lounge chairs gives people more opportunity to sit and stay awhile.

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

As people spend more time enjoying their properties, they can consider the many ways to make outdoor living spaces more comfortable.

STOCK PHOTO *Homes & Design*

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Signs a home exterior needs **UPDATING**

Renovations are a great way for homeowners to reshape their homes. Some may aspire to renovate so their home is more reflective of their personal taste, while others may do so in an effort to make their homes better align with modern styles and sensibilities.

Regardless of why a homeowner chooses to renovate, the need to do so is often evident to the naked eye, especially when the time comes to update home exteriors.

Curb appeal is often discussed in regard to the effects it can have when selling a home. But curb appeal is equally important for homeowners who aren't putting their homes on the market. A well-maintained, aesthetically appealing home is a source of pride, while a home with fading curb appeal can make homeowners feel a little sheepish. Homeowners who want their homes to maintain their curb appeal can look for signs that it's time to update their home exteriors.

Curling shingles

The roof may not be the first thing people think of when pondering curb

appeal, but a damaged roof can contribute to problems that ultimately affect the exterior and interior of the home. Multiple curling shingles indicate it's time to replace the roof.

The sight of curling shingles is not pretty, but the larger issue in such instances is the potential for costly water damage when water gets in through the affected shingles.

Dated entry door

Many home improvement experts insist they can determine when a home was built or most recently renovated simply by looking at the front door. Steel and glass doors are popular in modern homes, so homeowners with front doors with ornate designs and oval glass inserts can likely benefit from an upgrade to their entryway.

A modern front door can make a statement and real estate experts note how popular updated front doors are among buyers.

Unightly landscaping

It's not only the physical components

of the home that may suggest an update is necessary. Homeowners without a green thumb may have exterior landscaping that has seen better days. If a spring or summer day spent tending to your landscaping is not your ideal weekend pastime, then consider replacing unsightly landscaping with low-maintenance plants or hardscaping. These alternatives to more needy plants can create curb appeal without requiring any extra work for homeowners.

Cracked driveways, walkways

If the driveway looks like a busy road at the end of snow plowing season, chances are that's adversely affecting the impression people have of your home. In addition, cracked walkways indicate a need for renovations, as these areas are front and center when welcoming guests.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Updating a home's exterior can restore curb appeal and help homeowners feel better about their properties.

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create meaningful gifts

How your cherished moments can enhance your living space

There's a good reason so many people love taking pictures all the time – to capture the joy of everyday moments, relive memories over and over, and to share them with loved ones. If you have a collection of wonderful moments stored on your phone that you'd like to keep for years, why not turn your favorites into beautiful art to decorate your home or make one-of-a-kind gifts?

With Kodak Moments, you can create customized decor and personalized gifts that will last a lifetime. Made with the highest quality materials, Kodak Moments has everything you need at a variety of price points.

Creating your own Kodak Moments gift and décor is easy! Check out these four different ways to customize them online:

Incorporate color

To bring special moments to life, Canvas helps you turn your photos into stunning art that will enhance any wall in your home. You can transform meaningful memories into visual statements with a choice of six sizes. You can select just one large Canvas to feature on a wall or consider mixing and matching multiple sizes of Canvas to create an eye-catching gallery wall anywhere in your home. This is a great option for

highlighting favorite family moments on a living room, hallway or dining room wall.

Add a personal touch

The DIY Poster Frame comes with an 11x14 Poster Print and a unique frame, to add a contemporary and natural touch to your favorite photos. The frame is easy to assemble and perfectly secures your poster in place – just attach the magnetic wood borders, made from solid, sustainable wood in a natural finish. Even better, after hanging your poster frame, you can swap out different posters whenever you want, so your space always appears fresh and exciting. Its minimalistic appearance makes this a great choice for everything from dorm rooms or family rooms to playrooms and children's bedrooms.

Share special moments

The Moments Stand is a great gift to give to family, friends, teachers or co-workers, which displays their favorite photos in a modern and stylish way with a uniquely shaped magnetic stand. You can swap out 10 Classic Prints included with the stand, for a new display every day. This smaller format works well to add personal touches to small spaces like bookshelves,

mantles, or atop your desk – or create festive, personalized centerpieces for special occasions and gatherings.

Create special memories

You can celebrate moments when time stood still by giving a gift that will stand the test of time with this Metal Print with Bamboo Stand. The attractive metal and bamboo makes a unique look that suits everyone's style. With a choice of four different sizes, showcase your favorite memories on your tabletop, dresser top, shelf or desk for a perfect display.

With the high-quality image printing and materials used in all of these products, you can find the perfect way to celebrate each of your treasured Kodak Moments, to capture your favorite memories and share them with the people you care about. You can even get 10% off all orders by becoming a Moments Member.

Learn more about all the possibilities for gifting and home decor at [KodakMoments.com](https://www.KodakMoments.com).

(BPT)

Turn your photos into beautiful art to decorate your home or make one-of-a-kind gifts.

STOCK PHOTO *Homes & Design*



Lighting up

YOUR LIFE
AND HOME

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

As spring arrives, we look at our homes with new eyes, viewing what once seemed so bright and fashionable, now appears somewhat dated and in need of replacement.

While we may add a new coat of paint to the walls, or perhaps update the curtains, that is usually the extent of the changes we add in the spring, a time when we become more focused on the outdoors.

But there is another way to add beauty and update the look of the home without turning to major renovations. Visit Caravelle Lighting in Richmond, Illinois, and consider upgrading the light fixtures in your home to make them more in line with the way you live today.

Light fixtures are often thought of as a permanent part of the home as they are

usually chosen when the house is built or changed when the home is purchased. But light fixtures, like carpet, cabinets, and paint colors do become outdated. The fixtures picked years ago reflect the styles of those days, which are much different from the looks and needs popular today.

“Today a popular look in light fixtures is focused on an organic, textured look and includes materials such as jute, rattan, wicker, and even wood accents,” said Joe Kroupa, second generation owner of Caravelle Lighting. “The look is light and airy and warm.”

While this may be the current trendy look, Kroupa said choosing the look for your home may be far different from what your neighbor may choose. Therefore, it is important that before one makes a choice that they look at a variety of styles to find the best one for their lifestyle and the style of their home.

“We recommend coming into the store not only to see what is available but also to spend some time with us so that we get to know the customer and their style,” Kroupa advised. “Once we know them and understand the look they are trying to achieve, finding the correct fixture becomes much easier.”

Prior to coming into the store, Kroupa recommends going to the Caravelle website, www.caravellelight.com, and viewing the many types of fixtures available.

Caravelle Lighting has been family-owned and operated for more than 40 years. First opened in the Chicago area, the

Joe Kroupa, owner of Caravelle Lighting, stands in front of a group of popular organic fixtures on display in the shop.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Homes & Design*

family moved the business to Richmond in 1990. Since that time, they have continued to provide a variety of lighting needs and decorative accessories from this location for northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin.

The 5,000-square-foot showroom holds a complete line of lighting and related products from more than 50 manufacturers. Additional items can also be special ordered as needed.

Size and scale

A first visit to Caravelle can be mind boggling as one peruses the many ceiling fixtures hanging on display. The problem is often not in finding the fixture of your dreams but in finding several that meet those dreams and having to determine which is the very best one for the space. With the help of a professional, one who has had years of experience working with homeowners, customers can find what they need to fit the correct size and style fixtures in their space.

Kroupa said it isn't only the style and material of the light that is important but the correct scale for the room that must be considered.

A solid fixture may appear to be larger than an open one while in reality the solid one may be inches smaller. To create the perfect lighting size for your room, the staff member working with you, will use a formula to determine the correct size fixture for your space.

"There is no charge to work with you to make these decisions," Kroupa said. "Our goal is to help you make the best decision possible so that you are pleased with your purchases for many years. If you find a picture of a light that you really like, bring it in. They probably have the same picture or one very similar."



Even outdoor lights have taken on a new look. These sleek lights no longer have the conventional bulb but are LED lights that offer a pleasant and welcoming glow.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Homes & Design*



Caravelle Lighting offers crystal ring chandeliers, Tiffany-style chandeliers or lamps, and traditional crystal chandeliers.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Homes & Design*

Chandeliers

While crystal chandeliers may be your dream, many of today's are very different from the drop crystal chandeliers of the past. No longer a need to detach the crystals and wash each one and replace it on the chandelier. No need to replace the many light bulbs that may be included in the fixture.

Today the crystal chandelier is often lit by an integrated LED system. An LED is a light-emitting diode which produces light up to 90% more efficiently than the incandescent bulbs that have traditionally been used. There are no individual bulbs to change.

Ceiling fans

Ceiling fans made their appearance in homes in the 1920s, before home air conditioning, as a way to keep the home cooler during the hot days of summer.

While they declined in use with the appearance of air conditioning in homes, it was not long before homeowners realized that the use of the ceiling fan, along with the air conditioning, allowed them to raise the temperature in the home and still be comfortable as the air is moved around.

Today's fans have a very different look than those original fans. Most of the early fans had five blades, usually large to move the air. Today the ceiling fans have again gained popularity but they are very different from these early fans.

Most of the fans are three- or four-blade fans and although they may be much smaller in size, move more air. Some of the newer fans are surrounded by a light fixture and have clear blades, making them almost

invisible

These new style fans are known as fanoliers, because they combine the ceiling fan and the light fixture. They provide an attractive light fixture and still allow for the ceiling fan to move the air. The fans with DC motors are quieter, less wobbly, and move air better.

Lamps and more

As customers meander through the store, they will be attracted to a variety of table lamps, floor lamps, side tables, and other decorative accessories to add to the beauty of your home. Some tables have lamps integrated in them. The store also has tables that light up with an integrated LED light along the edges.

"We carry a lot of stained glass fixtures and lamps. We will probably always carry them as they do remain popular with customers," Kroupa said.

The stained glass features, whether hanging fixtures, lamps, or decorative pieces to place on a side table, add color to the room.

Outdoor spaces

Outdoor lights have also been upgraded. No longer the lamp-shaped light next to the door but an assortment of LED fixture, sleek with clear or frosted glass and black edging that will a new look to outside spaces.

Priced right

People often believe that they will save money by purchasing at a big box store or

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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How a housing counselor can help prepare you for homeownership

Buying a home can be intimidating, whether this is your first time or you've been around the real estate block before. The good news? You don't have to go it alone. If you're looking for a trusted partner throughout the process, working with a housing counselor can help prepare you for homeownership.

If you're not sure what a housing counselor does or whether this service is right for you, consider these insights from Freddie Mac:

What is a housing counselor?

Housing counselors are trained, independent professionals who are available to offer advice, listen and help you make informed decisions based on your financial situation and needs – often at little or no cost. Their job is to help you navigate the homebuying journey and ensure you're financially prepared for long-term, successful homeownership.

What services do they provide?

One of the primary roles of a housing counselor is to prepare you for homeownership through workshops and one-on-one counseling. The counselor will start by asking you questions about your income,

credit and savings to help determine if you're ready to buy and how much you plan on spending. Similar to a conversation with a potential lender, the more organized and prepared you are, the more productive your conversation will be. Once they understand your current financial situation, they will:

- Provide guidance on down payment options and local down payment assistance programs.
- Help you understand the features and costs associated with the various types of mortgages available.
- Teach you important financial skills, such as planning your budget and building, maintaining and improving your credit.
- Advise you on the role of your real estate agent and lender.

It's important to know that housing counselors can be there for you beyond the homebuying process. For example, if you are facing financial difficulties and struggling to pay your mortgage down the line, a housing counselor can offer financial guidance and work with your lender to help you avoid foreclosure.

How do you find a housing counselor?

Although finding a housing counselor

can be as simple as running a search online or calling a hotline, it's important to carefully consider your options. Unfortunately, scam artists abound, preying on home buyers and struggling homeowners alike. Here are three ways to find a legitimate housing counselor:

- Reach out to a HUD-certified housing counselor at one of Freddie Mac's Borrower Help Centers or Borrower Help Network for free assistance.
- Search for a HUD-certified housing counselor in your area on the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's website.
- Call the national HOPE hotline at 888-995-HOPE or visit its website at 995HOPE.org. This hotline is free and available 24 hours a day.

For more information about preparing for and sustaining long-term homeownership, visit My Home by Freddie Mac.

(STATEPOINT)

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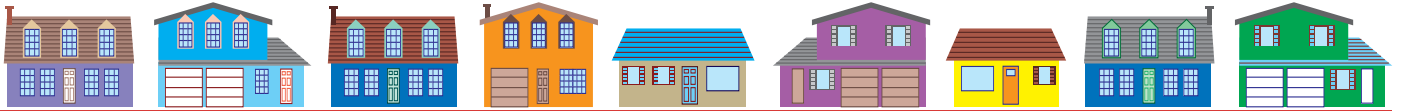


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home and property sales

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- 1710 Summit Ave..... \$ 108,500
- 1641 Ellis Ave..... \$ 124,000
- 1528 Illinois St..... \$ 120,000
- 811 Hagerer St..... \$ 123,000
- 1634 Albert St..... \$ 130,000
- 1810 Lasalle St..... \$ 126,500
- 939 Center St..... \$ 127,000
- 2501 Jerome Blvd..... \$ 128,000
- 1345 Grove Ave..... \$ 155,000
- 1615 Linden Ave..... \$ 140,000
- 1543 Oak Ct..... \$ 140,000
- 2051 Marquette St..... \$ 149,000
- 2611 Charles St..... \$ 153,000
- 1522 Holmes Ave..... \$ 150,000
- 2800 Webster St..... \$ 160,000
- 1234 Yout St..... \$ 160,000
- 2830 Wellington Dr..... \$ 155,000
- 1529 Kentucky St..... \$ 162,000
- 2036 Carlisle Ave..... \$ 175,000
- 6235 Highway 31..... \$ 400,000
- 1245 Johnson Ave..... \$ 408,000

Mount Pleasant

- 1623 Richard Ave..... \$ 70,000
- 1509 Bryn Mawr Ave..... \$ 189,000
- 45 S Emmertsen Rd..... \$ 215,000

Waterford

- 25204 W Loomis Rd..... \$ 75,000
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Burlington

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Twin Lakes

- 1714 Pheasant Ave..... \$ 220,000
- 1723 Pheasant Ave..... \$ 257,000
- 1101 Meadow View Ct Lt47 \$ 482,500
- 2105 Matthew Ave..... \$ 530,000

Bristol

- 8219 195th Ave..... \$ 260,000
- 8405 204th Cir..... \$ 410,000

- 19114 128th St..... \$ 539,900

Wilmot

- 11126 Fox River Rd..... \$ 340,000

Kenosha

- 6715 39th Ave..... \$ 123,500
- 6807 27th Ave..... \$ 130,200
- 4305 17th Ave..... \$ 150,000
- 6828 21st Ave..... \$ 168,000
- 7702 16th Ave..... \$ 152,500
- 4123 31st Ave..... \$ 128,000
- 1407 87th St..... \$ 175,000
- 2616 75th St..... \$ 175,000
- 4515 18th St..... \$ 255,000
- 8819 31st Ave..... \$ 270,000
- 5306 73rd St..... \$ 270,000
- 8318 22nd Ave..... \$ 285,000
- 3629 23rd St..... \$ 320,000
- 8925 33rd Ave..... \$ 315,000

CONDOS

Kenosha

- 6905 67th St #101..... \$ 157,777
- 316 56th St 306..... \$ 149,900
- 1241 30th Ct 5A..... \$ 165,300
- 8079 43rd Ave 8D..... \$ 169,900
- 7203 98th Ave 9E..... \$ 182,000

VACANT LAND

Kenosha

- 3208 16th St..... \$ 149,000
- 1061 22nd Ave..... \$ 425,000

Salem

- 23118 88th Pl..... \$ 68,000

WALWORTH COUNTY

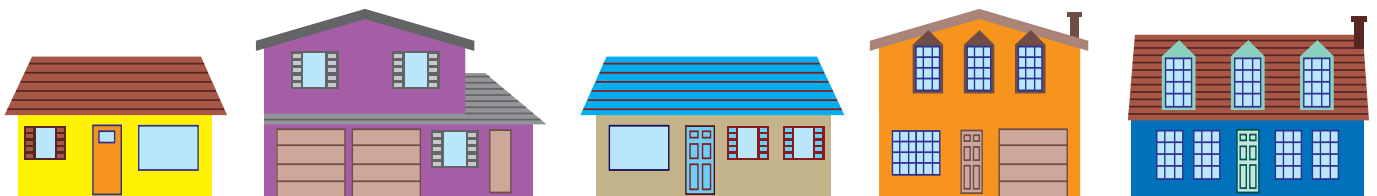
SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES

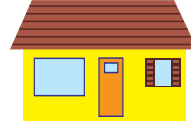
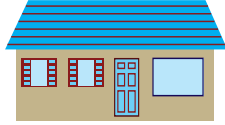
Genoa City

- W1160 Poinsetta Rd..... \$ 267,500
- 669 Partridge Pkwy..... \$ 287,000

Elkhorn

- 1139 Glenridge Ln..... \$ 320,000
- N6686 Club House Cir..... \$ 295,000





home and property sales

Here is a listing of recent single-family home, condominium and vacant land sales in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties. The information is provided through the Multiple Listing Service.

- N6756 Tippecanoe Trl \$ 295,000
- 454 N Jackson St \$ 280,000
- Whitewater**
- 207 N Jefferson St..... \$ 206,000
- 525 W Caine St \$ 240,000
- Delavan**
- 2577 Tilden Ave..... \$ 231,000
- N6340 N County Line Rd . \$ 241,000
- Lake Geneva**
- 515 Walworth St \$ 150,000
- N3094 Robin Rd..... \$ 250,000
- W4021 Kelly Rd..... \$ 1,075,000
- N2350 Knollwood Dr \$ 1,235,000
- Walworth**
- 458 Madison St \$ 225,000
- 612 Casey Ln \$ 340,000
- East Troy**
- 3079 Main St \$ 284,500
- 2548 S Sterling Cir \$ 365,000

- Fontana**
- 918 Juneau Dr..... \$ 650,000
- 248 3rd Ave \$ 570,000
- Delavan**
- 401 Creekside Pl..... \$ 365,000
- 2193 Newbury Ln \$ 380,000
- Lake Geneva**
- 1707 Woodland Dr 12-43 . \$ 338,000
- 1536 Highland Dr 8-54 \$ 399,900
- Fontana**
- 890 Windsor Dr 4 \$ 467,000
- 156 Abbey Springs Dr \$ 932,000

VACANT LAND

- Delavan**
- Lt53 Tamarack St..... \$ 35,000
- Lt52 Tamarack St..... \$ 35,000
- East Troy**
- Lt24 Leasure Ct..... \$ 74,400
- Lt1 Highway 20..... \$ 550,000

OUTDOOR LIVING • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Take a dip

A pool can be the perfect gathering spot on a warm day, while a spa/hot tub can bridge the gap to cooler weather. According to the Family Handyman, soaking in hot tubs can relax tired muscles after a long day, loosen up stiff joints, improve cardiovascular health, and reduce the time

it takes to fall asleep.

Bite back at bugs

Homeowners may want to consider using a professional exterminator to get rid of ticks, mosquitoes and other nuisance insects from outdoor spaces.

(METRO CREATIVE)

LIGHTING • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

through e-commerce, but Kroupa said that is not usually the case. Caravelle Lighting carries a variety of fixtures at all price points to suit everyone's budget. They can order whatever fixture a customer is interested in purchasing.

So, if you have shopped around for new lighting and haven't found what you are looking for or if you are just beginning to look at new fixtures and are learning about the new types of lighting available, it is time for a trip to Caravelle Lighting where one of their knowledgeable employees can answer your questions and help you find what you need.

"Our purpose is not to try to sell any one style over the other. We are here to point out differences and get to know your preferences. As we learn more about your likes and dislikes, we can help you in your choices. But in the end, it is the customer who makes the final choice," Kroupa said.

Caravelle Lighting is at 9307 Highway 12, Richmond, Illinois. They can be reached by phone at 815-678-4558. Or visit them at www.caravellelight.com.

The store is open for your visit Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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Other Real Estate

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