



Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

## Build a DIY Bar

**H**aving a gathering spot in your home for beverages, whether it's a family room, patio or man-cave, can be great for entertaining. Your bar can be dedicated to wine, beer, spirits—or even coffee—depending on your preferences and how you want to outfit it.

The first step to building a home bar is choosing the perfect location. If you want to include seating, that could double the area needed for the bar on its own, so make sure you and your guests can have easy access and egress. Decide if you want to walk behind the bar or if a structure set against a wall will work.

**a** Bars are traditionally set 42 inches high and 16-20 inches wide. If including bar stools (30 inches tall), leave an overhang of at least 8 inches for knee space and add a foot rail 7-9 inches off the floor.

**b** After constructing a wood frame, choose a front facing that will coordinate with the room's décor. Wood panels are a common choice, but you could opt for tile or galvanized steel roofing.

**c** The material you choose for the bar top is critical—it should be able to withstand spills



and look good doing it. Again, well-sealed wood is traditional (often paired with a curved molding for guest comfort and to hold back spills), but stone tiles or a resin-coated surface are other options.

**d** Include shelving underneath or behind the bar for glasses, bottles and tools.



## Choosing the Best Patio Furniture

When it comes to choosing the best patio furniture, there are a few key factors to consider. First, think about the material. Outdoor furniture needs to be durable and weather-resistant, so materials like metal, wicker and teak are good options. Next, consider the style and design of the furniture. Do you want something modern or more traditional? Finally, think about comfort and functionality. Look for furniture that is comfortable and has features like built-in storage. The best patio furniture is a combination of style, durability and functionality.

**1. Price is a factor** in any furniture purchase but going with low-cost plastic resin pieces might mean you'll have to replace them sooner rather than later. This material may be colorful at first but can fade quickly and develop stress cracks with sun exposure. To make your dollars go further, spend money on good pieces that you will get the most use out of and stand up to the elements.



**2. Before looking for specific pieces,** decide how you will use the space you have available to you. If you have a tight balcony or small stoop, a bistro table and chairs will be good for al fresco dining, whereas two cushy armchairs will be better for reading and conversation. For a bigger patio, you may be able to have both dining and lounge areas.



**3. If you have collected mismatched pieces** over the years and want to unify the look, it's easy to repaint metal frames in one or two complementary colors—just make sure to remove any rust before spraying with primer and paint appropriate for outdoor furniture. Complete the transformation by adding seat cushions and pillows made from weather-proof fabric covers that you can remove and toss in the washing machine as needed.



# How to Install a Ceiling Fan

**I**nstalling a ceiling fan can be tricky, but with the right tools and instructions, it can be done. As with any home improvement, though, preparation will help avert a minor disaster. In this case, it means:

- ▶ Measuring the room and selecting a fan with the correct diameter. Don't forget to take doors opening into the room into account.
- ▶ Mounting the fan to an electrical ceiling box that's designed for a heavy fixture—not just a standard light fixture.
- ▶ Checking the ceiling joists for existing wiring or plumbing that might be in the way before you begin.

## Now you can start your installation.

**1. Turn off the power:** Before you start, make sure you turn off the power to the room where you will be installing the ceiling fan at the circuit breaker. Tape over switches at the breaker box and wall to prevent anyone from mistakenly restoring power.

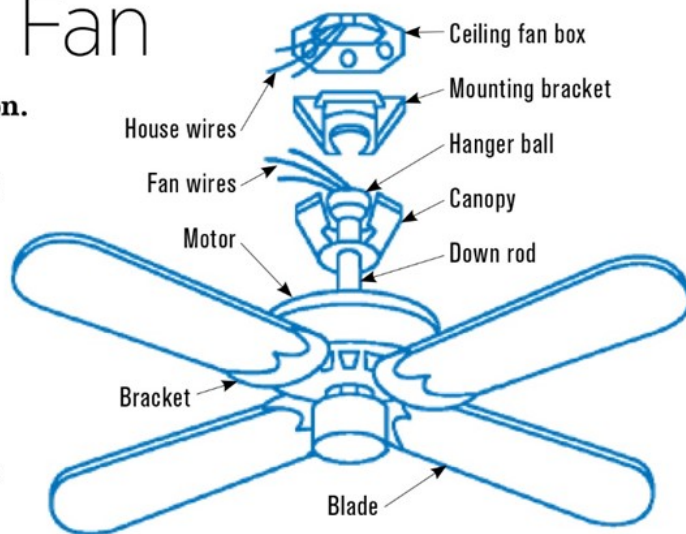
**2. Assemble the fan:** Follow the manufacturer's instructions to assemble the fan.

**3. Install the mounting bracket:** The mounting bracket is what holds the fan to the ceiling. Secure it to the ceiling using screws and a screwdriver.

**4. Connect the wires:** Connect the wires from the ceiling to the wires on the fan.

**5. Attach the fan to the mounting bracket:** Once the wires are connected, attach the fan to the mounting bracket using the included screws and a screwdriver.

**6. Install the canopy:** The canopy is the cover that goes over the motor and wiring. Attach it to the mounting bracket using screws and a screwdriver.



**7. Attach the blades:** Attach the blades to the motor housing using the included screws and a screwdriver.

**8. Turn the power back on:** Once everything is installed, turn the power back on at the circuit breaker and test the fan to make sure it's working properly.

With these steps, you should be able to install a ceiling fan in no time. Just remember to always follow the manufacturer's instructions and turn off the power before you start.



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