

SPRING 2025

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HARRISBURG

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**PA HOME  
+ GARDEN  
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**FEB. 27 - MAR. 2, 2025**

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# 2025 PA HOME + GARDEN SHOW SHOW GUIDE



## PA HOME + GARDEN SHOW



**FOUR DAYS ONLY!**  
**FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 2, 2025**  
**PA FARM SHOW COMPLEX,**  
**HARRISBURG**

Appearances by  
**Christopher Knight on March 1 & 2**  
**and Jeff Devlin on Feb. 28 & March 1**

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- Shop, compare and save

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## SHOW HOURS

**THURSDAY** February 27, 12 - 8 pm

**FRIDAY** February 28, 10 am - 8 pm

**SATURDAY** March 1, 10 am - 8 pm

**SUNDAY** March 2, 10 am - 6 pm

## LOCATION

PA Farm Show Complex, Main Hall\*  
2300 North Cameron Street (Cameron & Maclay Streets)

Harrisburg, PA 17110

\*Enter parking lot through Gate J and you'll be directed to the entrance.

## TICKETS

Adults (box office Feb. 27-March 2): \$11

Adults (online through Feb. 26): \$9

\*Online discount courtesy of Members 1st Federal Credit Union

Children ages 12 and under: Free

\*\*Advance Adult Admission will be at the \$9 discounted rate through 2/26/2025.

Starting opening day of the show, the price will increase to \$11 online, same as box office pricing.

## Buy ONLINE & SAVE \$3 Use promo code GUIDE PAHomeShow.com

Valid throughout the show on regular adult admission only.

## SPECIAL TICKET PROMOTIONS

**Senior Day - Thursday, Feb. 27:** Guests ages 60+ (with I.D.) receive a 50% discount off regular adult admission at the box office. Not valid with any other offers.

**Hero Day - Friday, Feb. 28:** All active military personnel, veterans, fire, police, first responders, nurses, doctors and teachers receive one free admission (with valid I.D.) at the box office.

**Friends & Family Day - Sunday, March 2:** After 1 p.m., purchase two tickets for the price of one, and enjoy special family activities such as free face painting for kids.

**Book Bank Benefitting the Four Diamonds Fund & Children's Miracle Network:** Bring a new book to donate to the Book Bank at Hershey Medical Center in Hershey, PA and receive \$2 off tickets at the box office (see more info on page 10).

## ONLINE

[www.PAHomeShow.com](http://www.PAHomeShow.com)

[@PAHomeAndGarden](https://www.facebook.com/PAHomeAndGarden)

[@pahomeandgarden](https://www.instagram.com/pahomeandgarden)

## Welcome to the 2025 PA Home + Garden Show!

As the largest home and garden show in central Pennsylvania, it is our goal to provide you with the area's top resources and professionals to help you achieve your home improvement goals. We work with local experts year-round to plan and present exclusive features that are designed to inspire your own home projects and living spaces.

The show's 215-plus home and garden professionals, experts and designers are all ready to share their knowledge and the latest trends in order to provide you with an abundance of design inspiration, valuable tips and new ideas.

Make sure to support local artisans and retailers in our specialty markets – and take something home to help you welcome Spring in your own home!

Jenna Naffin, Show Manager



## THANK YOU TO OUR SHOW SPONSORS AND PARTNERS!



# EXPLORE

## The Expanded Garden Areas



### FEATURE GARDENS & OUTDOOR LIVING

Welcome Spring with a stroll through the expanded Garden Area's inspirational gardens, water gardens and outdoor living exhibits from some of the region's top landscapers. A.H. Reiff Landscape Supply and QnC Construction, Burdge's Water Gardens, Jesse James Hardscaping and Daniel J. Reed Landscape show how you can incorporate some of their ideas for outdoor living, including a golf-themed feature, along with more exciting new trends.



### PLANTS ON THE GROW

Meet Fern, the mobile plant shop from Ashcombe Farm & Greenhouses! You'll find her welcoming visitors in the expanded Garden Area. Fern is green on the outside and inside, as she's stocked with an abundance of plants, garden decor and gifts to help bring Spring into your home.



### WINE GARDEN

Take a break while visiting the Garden Area and experience some of the region's best wines! Juniata Valley Winery's relaxing Wine Garden is where you can sample (and purchase) from a variety of their locally-produced wines.

## LET IT GROW!

The more you know, the more you'll grow! No matter what your level of gardening experience, you'll want to stop by this feature area to learn from the experts how to plan your Spring garden and more – whether you just bought your gardening gloves, or your motto is “garden more, work less.”



## ASK A GARDEN EXPERT!

Do you have questions about your home garden? Looking for help identifying a plant or species? Visit the Ask A Garden Expert! booth in the Garden Hall, and let experts from Harrisburg Garden Club help you out!



## BAR SHEDS

Move over, Man Caves and She Sheds: These bar sheds built by skilled students from Cumberland-Perry Area Career & Technical Center and Dauphin County Technical School will inspire you to add one (and add more fun) to your own backyard.



## ASK A DESIGNER!

If you have questions about home design, or are just not sure where to start, make sure to visit the Ask A Designer! booth – that's where expert Abby Fitzgerald, designer and owner of Fitz Haus Interior Design, is ready to assist you!



## ROSIE THE FLOWER TRUCK

Palmyra Greenhouse's popular Rosie the Flower Truck delights all who meet her! This vintage vehicle is filled with fresh Spring blooms and other flower-related items available for purchase. Learn how she has even inspired the children's book, *Rosie and Friends - Adventures of a Red Flower Truck*.



## PEACEFUL PAVILION

See how the stunning 20' x 20' timber frame pavilion by Timberhaven Log & Timber Homes creates a backyard retreat that brings both beauty and serenity, and can also be a warm and inviting space for gatherings and events.

## MAIN STAGE furnished by David's Interiors

Check out informative Main Stage presentations by experts taking place throughout the show!

Gain some insights and advice, and enjoy entertaining stories in a Q&A with celebrity guest expert **Christopher Knight** (Peter Brady from *The Brady Bunch* TV show), owner of Christopher Knight Home, on Saturday, March 1 at 1 p.m. and Sunday, March 2 at 1 p.m.



## EASE OF LIVING

This inviting design room by David's Interiors' designers Duane Bell and Sharon Brill achieves the desirable combination of carefree, comfort, beauty, and function – the ultimate “Ease of Living.”



## SHOP THE SPECIALTY MARKETS



Master carpenter, contractor and renovator **Jeff Devlin**, known from HGTV and DIY/Magnolia Network shows including *I Hate My Bath*, *Spice Up My Kitchen*, *Ellen's Design Challenge* and *Stone House Revival*, offers visitors valuable tips in his “How to Hire a Contractor” presentation on Friday, Feb. 28 at 6 p.m. and Saturday, March 1 at 11 a.m.



## WHISKEY BACKYARD

Have fun sampling (and purchasing) Hazard's Distillery's hand-crafted, locally-produced libations, and playing some backyard games in their Whiskey Backyard.



## PLANT BAR & GARDEN MARKET

Love houseplants? At the Plant Bar by Plantscapes by Design, you can create your own to bring home! Choose from a variety of succulents and other plants, select a pretty pot, and top your custom creation with moss or stone. You'll also find a delightful mix of houseplants, one-of-a-kind decor and gift items to shop from in the Garden Market.



## HARRISBURG'S HOMEGROWN MARKET

We've got your unique shopping opportunity for one-of-a-kind home décor and gifts! You'll find local artisans and retailers offering original artwork, specialty foods, and homemade and finely-crafted items in this open market area.

## SPRING ENTERTAINING

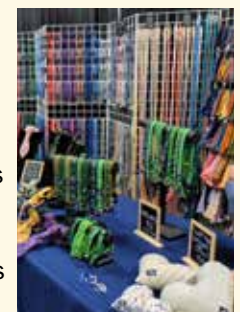
Get inspired for Spring picnics for the adults and unique sleepovers for the kids! Experience a backyard oasis featuring a picnic display for entertaining in your yard or any outdoor space, and a teepee party for the little ones – there's something for all of your entertaining needs with Backyard Bliss.

## HOME DEPOT KIDS WORKSHOPS

This free, hands-on learning experience encourages skill-building and creativity in children ages 5-12, who follow step-by-step instructions and learn to work with hand tools like hammers and screwdrivers, and painting. (See workshops schedule at PAHomeShow.com.)

## THE BARKING LOT

Don't forget your furry, four-legged family members! Visit the Barking Lot pet market for all the toys, treats and accessories you'll want to bring home for them. A portion of all sales is donated to Canine Rescue of Central PA, to help it continue to protect and improve the quality of life for homeless dogs.





# Special Offers AND EVENTS

Events take place on the Main Stage furnished by David's Interiors. Presentation times and topics are subject to change.

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29

### SENIOR DAY

All show visitors age 60 and over receive a 50% discount on admission at the box office (with valid ID).



## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

### HERO DAY

All active military personnel, veterans, fire, police, first responders, nurses, doctors and teachers get one free admission at the box office (with valid ID).



### 4 PM: THE SOLAR GIRL: SOLAR 101 - BENEFITS OF SOLAR ENERGY

### 5 PM: NEGLEY'S WATER: HOW'S YOUR WATER?

### 6 PM: JEFF DEVLIN: HOW TO HIRE A CONTRACTOR

Licensed contractor, master carpenter, woodworker, and southeastern Pennsylvania home renovator Jeff Devlin, known for demonstrating his expertise in such HGTV and DIY/Magnolia Network shows as *I Hate My Bath*, *Spice Up My Kitchen*, *Ellen's Design Challenge* and *Stone House Revival* (among others), shares valuable advice in his Main Stage presentation.

## SATURDAY, MARCH 1

### 11 AM: JEFF DEVLIN: HOW TO HIRE A CONTRACTOR

Licensed contractor, master carpenter, woodworker, and southeastern Pennsylvania home renovator Jeff Devlin, known for demonstrating his expertise in such HGTV and DIY/Magnolia Network shows as *I Hate My Bath*, *Spice Up My Kitchen*, *Ellen's Design Challenge* and *Stone House Revival* (among others), shares valuable advice in his Main Stage presentation.

### 12 PM: DOGGY FASHION SHOW

Everyone loves to see the adorable, adoptable dogs from Canine Rescue of Central PA strutting their Spring finery in style on the Main Stage! This popular event helps to bring more attention to the sweet pups seeking their fur-ever homes.



### 1 PM: CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT Q & A

Celebrity guest expert Christopher Knight is known to millions as Peter Brady of the classic TV show *The Brady Bunch*, and the hit HGTV show, *A Very Brady Renovation*, among many other TV roles. Now his line of home furnishings has skyrocketed to success, quickly becoming one of the most recognizable online brands. Come to the Main Stage to hear him share stories about his TV career, entrepreneurial ventures and more.

### 2 PM: PDC SPAS: ENHANCE YOUR HOME'S ENJOYMENT AND VALUE - INTEGRATING HOT TUBS AND SWIM SPAS INTO YOUR OUTDOOR PLAN

### 3 PM: NICHOLAS FEAGLEY: A REALTOR'S HANDY TIPS FOR BUYERS OR HOMEOWNERS

### 4 PM: TIMBERHAVEN LOG & TIMBER HOMES: UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF A LOG & TIMBER HOME PACKAGE

## SUNDAY, MARCH 2

### FRIENDS & FAMILY DAY

Bring your family and friends to enjoy 2-for-the-price-of-one tickets after 1 p.m., and be treated to fun activities including free face painting for kids!

### 11 AM: LIBERTY BASEMENT SYSTEMS: PROTECTING YOUR BIGGEST INVESTMENT - TIPS AND TRICKS FOR BASEMENTS, CRAWLSPACES AND FOUNDATIONS

### 1 PM: CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT Q & A

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### 3 PM: TIMBERHAVEN LOG & TIMBER HOMES: UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF A LOG & TIMBER HOME PACKAGE

PA HOME  
+GARDEN  
SHOW

# PA HOME + GARDEN SHOW AND THE COMMUNITY

## CANINE RESCUE OF CENTRAL PA

Canine Rescue of Central PA is receiving a portion of the proceeds from purchases made at the Barking Lot pet market to help support their important work in helping dogs in helpless situations. Don't miss the Doggy Fashion Show on the Main Stage Saturday, March 1 at 12 p.m. to see some of their adorable, adoptable dogs strutting in style.



## THE FOUR DIAMONDS FUND & CHILDREN'S MIRACLE NETWORK

Show visitors are invited to donate a book for the Book Bank at Hershey Medical Center in Hershey, PA, to help to build a "library of love." In exchange, they will receive \$2 off tickets at the box office. The children undergoing treatments at the center will be able to enjoy the books together with their families during a difficult time for them.



## DAUPHIN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOL AND CUMBERLAND-PERRY AREA CAREER & TECHNICAL CENTER

Skilled trade students from Dauphin County Technical School and Cumberland-Perry Area Career & Technical Center constructed impressive bar sheds for the show, and applied their landscaping skills to the exhibit area. Learn more about the programs offered by these two career and technical high schools serving a total of 24 area school districts and offering programs of study including construction, manufacturing, arts and technology, health and human services, hospitality, transportation and more.



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# PA HOME + GARDEN SHOW

## Welcomes Celebrity Guest Expert

# CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT

See actor Christopher Knight (Peter Brady of *The Brady Bunch*) and founder of online home furnishings line *Christopher Knight Home* on the Main Stage

Saturday, March 1 at 1 p.m. and Sunday, March 2 at 1 p.m.

Once and forever a “Brady,” Christopher Knight met life as a child actor, starring as “Peter Brady” in the immortal American classic TV show, *The Brady Bunch*. In the early 2000s, Christopher returned to his entertainment roots, re-establishing himself as an actor, host, spokesperson and entertainment figure, with TV appearances including such hit shows as *That ’70s Show*, *Blue Collar TV*, *Dragging The Classics* and *The Masked Singer*, among many others. Christopher also went on to host *Trivial Pursuit – America Plays*, a nationally syndicated game show.

In 2019, Knight and his “Brady” siblings took part in a unique TV experiment with HGTV’s *A Very Brady Renovation*, where they recreated the iconic “Brady Bunch” house in real life, inside the home only used for the exterior shots of the sitcom. This “experiment” broke TV records, and still holds the distinction of being one of the most-watched cable TV programs of all time. Christopher recently teamed up with his “Brady” brother Barry Williams for *The Real Brady Bros* podcast, a weekly episodic recap and retrospective dialog on their classic episodes.

As an entrepreneur, Chris’ latest off-screen success is his line of Christopher Knight Home home furnishings, which has achieved great acclaim. His pieces even became the subject of international media headlines when two of his chairs were prominently featured in Oprah Winfrey’s 2021 televised interview with Prince Harry and Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex.



### Chris gave us a few of his perspectives on home improvement as a taste of what he’ll share with show visitors:

**When you design a room, what is the most important interior design advice you give?** Less is more. Be mindful of scale! Take measurements and give at least four feet of space around furniture that serves as traffic areas. I’ve learned that not all people are able to think in an imagined three-dimensional space. As a result, some have a hard time anticipating the fit and flow of a room. Finding the balance between too little and too much is sort of a “Goldilocks” zone, and important to consider thoroughly.

**Tips for big outdoor impact in landscaping or curb appeal?** Good exterior lighting can add a magical quality to a home. It infuses your home with drama and architectural depth. It can be cleverly used to emphasize your home’s architectural strengths, while drawing attention away from any shortcomings.

**Best home purchase for under \$100?** The best home purchase for under \$100 is a video doorbell like Ring. It is a simple, cost-effective way to boost your sense of security – from knowing who’s entering and leaving your home, to seeing packages arrive, and, in some cases, disappear from your porch, to avoiding unwanted solicitations. Video doorbells are an easy way to improve your awareness of your surroundings. Wire up for more than just a door cam; whole home surveillance technology today is affordable. It’ll cost more than \$100 but is well worth the sense of security you can provide your family.

**What home gadget or tool should every homeowner own?** A compact, cordless rechargeable screwdriver. Hands down, the most useful under \$30 tool purchase for the home.

# SPRING HOME AND GARDEN CHECKLIST

## IN THE YARD AND GARDEN:

- Clear flower beds of old mulch and leaves
- Divide clumping perennials
- Plant perennials, cold-hardy annuals and vegetables
- Edge garden beds, walkways and driveway
- Apply mulch and/or ground covers
- Clean patio/outdoor furniture; check and repair them, if needed
- Inspect garden hoses, sprinklers, fittings and attachments
- Tune up/charge up mower and other lawn equipment
- Clean and sharpen shovels, pruners, loppers and trowels
- Prune summer-blooming trees and shrubs; plant any new trees and shrubs when ground has thawed
- Lawn maintenance: Rake and remove dead grass, replace with topsoil and seed, fertilize
- Test irrigation systems. If using a timer, reset for Spring weather and sun exposure.

## AROUND THE HOUSE:

- Check exterior faucets
- Clean rain gutters and adjust downspouts
- Clean windows and screens; recaulk windows where needed
- Clean curtains and blinds
- Inspect air conditioning, replace filter, and schedule servicing, if needed
- Inspect, repair and reseal wooden decks, fences and railings
- Examine roof, shingles and exterior chimney for winter damage
- Clean out fireplace; have chimney inspected and cleaned



## DID YOU KNOW?

- Americans spend most of their investments on home improvements during the months of April and June.
- According to Opendoor's 2024 Home Decor Report:
  - » Homeowners are continuing to invest in their properties, with an average annual expenditure of \$5,635 on home renovation and remodeling projects. Kitchens and bathrooms remain the top priorities for these upgrades, reflecting a desire to enhance both functionality and aesthetic appeal.
  - » Homeowners are opting for projects like refinishing existing materials and installing energy-saving dimmers to reduce environmental impact and manage costs more effectively.
  - » 63 percent of participants prefer a residence with an updated kitchen. Though that can mean high-end appliances and luxe materials, about half say a large kitchen island is a must-have.

Experience the Possibilities

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## September 27 to October 5, 2025



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# PA HOME + GARDEN SHOW

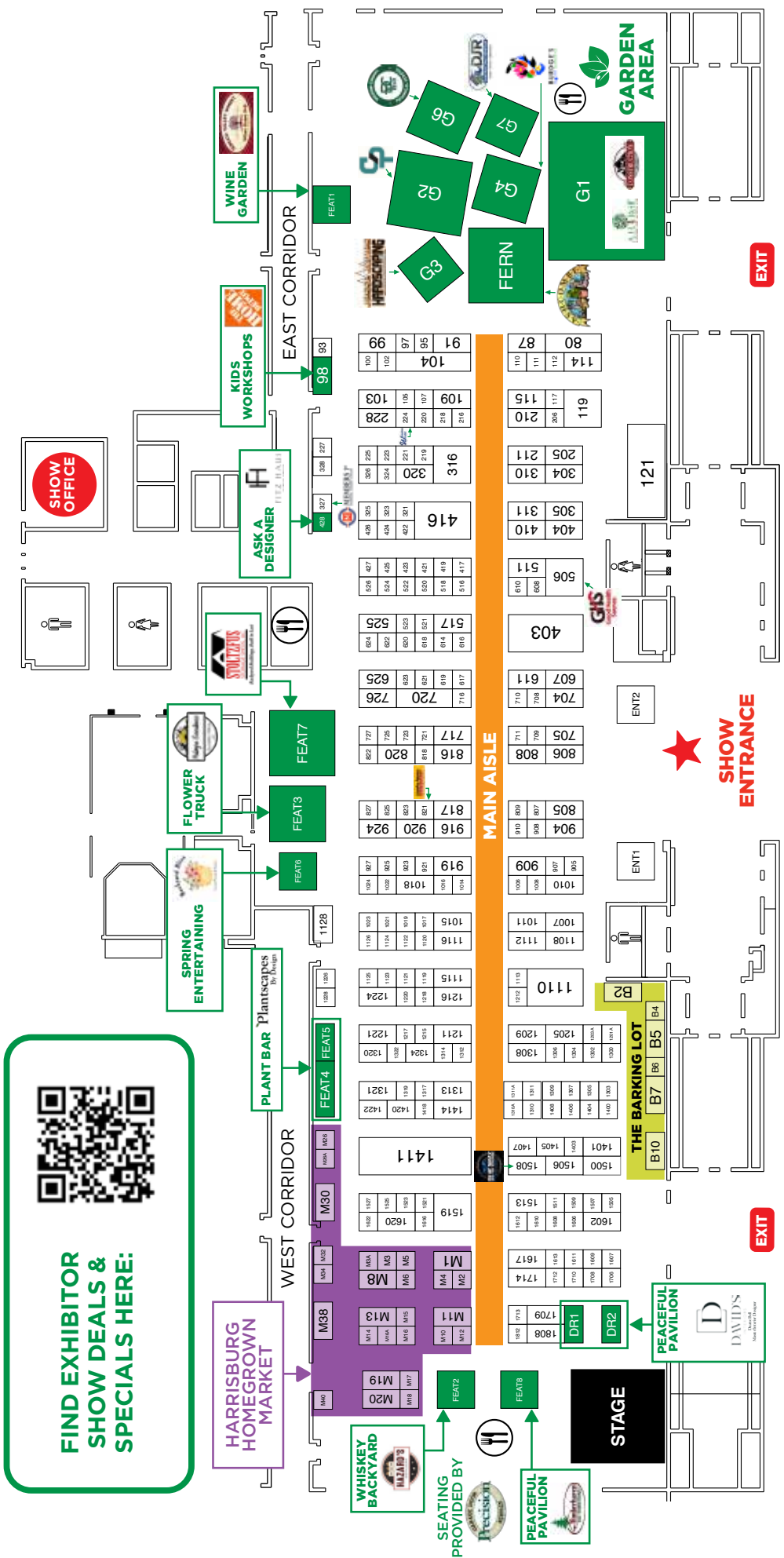
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*Welcome to the Show!*



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MARKETPLACE | EVENTS

MACLAY STREET ENTRANCE



# Cultivating a Garden Paradise

## Top Tips for Pennsylvania Gardeners

**Gardening in Pennsylvania is more than a hobby! PA Gardeners embrace a way of life from the Appalachian Mountains to fertile river valleys, and Pennsylvania's climate and soil bring challenges and rewards to every home gardener.**

**We have tips to help you plant a Keystone State garden. And if you need help with your outdoor spaces, contact an expert at your local Home Builders Association!**

### Understand Your Growing Zone

Pennsylvania's USDA Hardiness Zones range from **5a to 7b**. Knowing your zone is key for choosing plants that thrive in your climate. Check out a hardiness zone map or contact your Penn State Extension office to find out your zone number. In colder northern regions, plant hardy perennials like **hostas**, **daylilies**, and **sedum**, or vegetables with shorter growing seasons, such as **radishes** and **kale**. In warmer southeastern zones, have fun with a broader range of plants, including warm weather flowers like **hibiscus** and long-season crops like **sweet potatoes** and **okra**.

### Test and Amend Your Soil

Pennsylvania's soil can vary from heavy clay in the central valleys to sandy soil in the eastern areas. You may want to test your soil to get specifics on what your garden needs. Your Penn State Extension office can provide a kit to check pH levels and nutrient contents in your home garden.

- **Add Organic Matter:** Compost, aged manure, and leaf mold can improve your soil's texture and fertility.
- **Adjust pH:** Pennsylvania soils can be acidic, so add lime to raise pH levels, or sulfur to lower them, depending on the plants you're growing.

Getting your soil ready will give your garden the best chance to be healthy and beautiful.

### Time Your Planting

When you enjoy four seasons every year as we do in Pennsylvania, it's important to know when to add each type of plant to your garden.

- **Spring:** Start cool-season crops like **lettuce**, **spinach**, and **peas** in early spring. You can plant them from seed as soon as the soil thaws.
- **Summer:** Wait until after the last frost date (think late April to mid-May) to add warm weather crops like **tomatoes**, **peppers**, and **beans** which can all be planted as seedlings.
- **Fall:** Plant mums, asters, and ornamental kale to add color as the weather cools. Cool-season vegetables like **broccoli** and **carrots** can be added in late summer for a fall harvest.

### A Plan for All Seasons

Choose plants that highlight your garden in different seasons, so you can enjoy your efforts all year.

#### Seasonal Suggestions:

- **Spring:** Add color with early bloomers like tulips and daffodils.
- **Summer:** Fill spaces with zinnias, cosmos, and heat-loving vegetables.





- **Fall:** Enjoy the brilliant colors of maples, mums, and asters.
- **Winter:** Add interest with evergreen and support the birds with plants like **hollies** that retain their berries.

### Water Wisely

Even though Pennsylvania usually gets enough rain, we certainly see dry spells happen during the summertime. Did you know there are ways to conserve water and keep your garden healthy?

#### Tips for Smart Watering:

- **Deep Watering:** Water deeply and less often to encourage deep root growth.
- **Mulch:** Apply a 2–3-inch layer of mulch around plants to hold in moisture and hold back weeds.
- **Irrigation:** Consider drip irrigation systems or use soaker hoses to deliver water directly to the roots and reduce water waste.

### Combat Pests Naturally

Pests challenge the best of gardeners, but there are ways to handle them without using dangerous chemicals.

#### Natural Pest Control Strategies:

- **Companion Planting:** Pair plants like marigolds with tomatoes to deter nematodes and other pests.
- **Attract Beneficial Insects:** Ladybugs, lacewings, and praying mantises prey on common garden pests.
- **DIY Solutions:** Neem oil, insecticidal soaps, and homemade garlic sprays can be effective against aphids and beetles without harming precious pollinators.

### Get Ready for Wildlife

Pennsylvania's deer, rabbits, and groundhogs are well-known for eating lots of garden plants, trees, and shrubs.

#### How to Protect Your Garden:

- **Fencing:** Install sturdy, tall fencing to keep out deer and other animals.
- **Repellents:** Use commercial or homemade sprays to deter wildlife. Options include garlic, hot pepper, and predator urine.
- **Deer-Resistant Plants:** Include lavender, boxwood, and yarrow, which are less appealing to hungry animals, and research other options you'll enjoy.

### Extend Your Growing Season

Pennsylvania's growing season can be made longer with some easy garden tasks so you can enjoy fresh produce and flowers for even more months of the year.

## WHY RISK IT? Protect Your Investment



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### Tools for Season Extension:

- **Row Covers:** Lightweight fabric protects plants from frost and pests.
- **Cold Frames:** Simple structures trap heat, creating a mini-greenhouse effect.
- **Mulch:** Thick mulch layers insulate soil and roots, helping plants survive unexpected cold snaps.

Getting involved with other gardeners in a club, at a community garden, or through the Penn State Extension Master Gardeners Program can give you planting inspiration and answer lots of your questions throughout the gardening season.

If you decide to hire a professional to start you on your planting journey, make a call to one of the experts in your local Home Builders Association. ■

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Core values of Customer Service, Commitment, Teamwork, Honesty, and Recognition have guided Swartz

Kitchens & Baths through four generations of creating relationships with homeowners, builders, and other industry professionals.

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# How to Choose Your Builder



First things first... While you read this short article, forget about the logo at the top of the page. We are not trying to persuade you to choose us. We are merely hoping to help you better understand how to choose your new home builder to ensure that you have a successful building experience, regardless of whom you choose.

Choosing your builder will have lasting ramifications that go well beyond the duration of the initial construction period. These effects can be both positive and negative. Choosing your builder should be an involved process from both parties.

We've all heard these sayings before:

**Good, Fast, Cheap:  
pick two.**

**Quality, Service, Price:  
pick two.**

**You get what you  
paid for.**

**The bitterness  
of poor quality is  
remembered long  
after the sweetness  
of a low price faded  
from memory.**

There is an element of truth to each of these sayings. We all make our purchasing decisions differently. For example, your decision-making process for where to buy groceries is different than where you buy a car. Your decision about selecting a grocery store may be more about location or products that meet your dietary choices! When buying a new car, once you've decided on a model, the difference may be between service and price. When selecting between grocery stores or dealerships, all have relatively similar products regardless of where you go but you can change your choices every month or every few years. When choosing a new home builder, you'll need to live with your choice every single day for as long as you live in that house.

Builders have many dissimilarities in values, service, quality, pricing – the list goes on and on. This is why the decision of choosing your builder must be carefully considered. The wrong

decision can have devastating effects: unmet schedules, cost overruns, low quality products, unmet expectations, increased long-term costs, incomplete projects, and one very unhappy customer! On the contrary, the right choice in a builder will result in a successful project, client expectations met, and a customer willing to share their wonderful experience with others! Let's talk about Quality, Service, and Price and then dive into practical steps of how to choose your builder.

## QUALITY

Every builder will use this term to describe their work regardless of how their quality "measures up" to the competition. Many people define quality simply as incorporating finishes such as crown molding, granite countertops and hardwood floors. They often misinterpret great curb appeal as quality. These things alone, however, are not a good measurement of quality.

True quality should be measured by long-term performance, energy efficiency, maintenance costs and craftsmanship. With this said, curb appeal is very important. Most quality-built homes incorporate finishes such as granite countertops and hardwood floors. The true measure of quality, however, is in the things that you cannot see: the foundation, framing, flashing, insulation, HVAC system,

and much more. If you do not believe me, just watch a few episodes of “Holmes on Homes”! A quality builder will make sure that every home has great curb appeal, good products and performs at a high level for life.

## **SERVICE**

Every builder offers a different level of service. In today’s cultures, we have all become accustomed to receiving poor service. Returning phone calls and emails promptly should be the rule, not the exception. When you are making a one-time purchase on a product that has a short life, service may not be a high priority to you. When you are building a home or remodeling your existing home, the service that you receive should be of much greater importance. The relationship with your builder can last for a lifetime. You must be certain that their level of service will meet your expectations.

## **PRICE**

There is a fair price for every product. Products of greater quality typically cost more than products of lesser quality. Of course, there are some exceptions to this rule. While price may be the most important factor on some purchases, it may not be as important on others. When considering a construction project, there are not only “first” costs, but also long-term costs. While a low initial cost may look appealing, it is not a true measure of value. Utility bills, maintenance expenses, quality of mechanical systems, efficiency, etc., will all impact the long-term cost and need to be considered. If you save \$10,000 on the construction costs, but spend \$200 per month more in utility bills, did you really save money? When considering costs, it is imperative that the buyer clearly understands the scope of work that is included in a builder’s quote.

Unwritten exclusions, low allowances, incomplete scope of work and vague

specifications will make a builder’s price appear much lower than it actually is. This typically results in higher costs, allowance overages, additional work, lower quality products, unmet schedules...I will stop there. I am sure that you have heard the stories!

So, how do you choose the right builder? Every builder has strengths and weaknesses – production scheduling, depth of experience, financially sound, access to materials, supplier relationships, personality, and more. Every builder has different standards – processes, materials used, transparency, communication schedules, budget checkpoints, and more. Every builder has their “niche” – home styles, features and finishes, history of projects, clear price range delineations, and more. Keep these practical ideas in mind as you choose the right builder for you.

**1. Interview your builder.** Do not just ask for a price quote. Explore their tendencies, depths and experiences. Find out about their history, their experience, their strengths and their weaknesses. Ask for references from current and active clients as well as past clients and call several of them. Ask these references detailed questions regarding the builder’s personality, employees, trade contractors, schedules, prices, quality, organization, service, call-backs, etc. Ask to see projects – both completed and in progress. You can also request references from their vendors. This will help you learn how they treat their suppliers and trade contractors. Check with the BBB and local trade associations. The best way to learn about a builder is to ask your friends and relatives!

**2. Determine your own level of expectations for quality.** Don’t only judge your builders for their experiences and expertise

but measure those against your expectations before selecting a builder. How will you manage the process from your side? Do you require frequent updates? Are you one who can look at the bigger picture versus the minor day-to-day processes? Have you truly identified your expectations regarding quality products, processes and finishes as they related to expected budget? Only then can you select a builder who can meet your expectations. If you have high quality expectations and you select a builder who has a lower standard, you will be very disappointed. If you have modest expectations and you select a builder who has higher standards, then you may be paying more than necessary to meet your expectations.

- 3. Gauge their level of service.** Select a builder who consistently demonstrates the level of service that you expect. Remember, service typically does not get better after a contract is signed!
- 4. Be sure to receive accurate, detailed, and complete information.**

It’s very easy for a builder to provide a low “first price” with omissions, exclusions, low allowances and vague specifications. Extremely detailed, accurate, and complete designs and specifications are critical to achieving the expected end result.

Do your due diligence to guarantee that the design and scope of work are exactly what you have in mind.

Thanks for reading! We hope this short guide helps you in your search to find the right builder for your home! ■

# Going Wild

## with Native Plants



Native plants are a link to our ancestors, a popular trend, and a key to a healthy environment in Pennsylvania.



In the Keystone State, we can trace the history of native plants all the way back to times before the European settlers came to our shores. In hundreds of years, these amazing plants grew and adapted to the varied terrain and the climates we all know in our state and provided food and shelter for our wildlife.



Pennsylvania gardeners are learning the beauty and ease of including native plants in landscapes and beds. Not only are natives colorful and interesting additions to any property, once established in an ideal spot, they'll grow quickly, be more likely to survive during dry spells, and be overall less needy when it comes to fertilizing and pest management.

Native plants play an incredible role in supporting the wildlife we love in Pennsylvania. Because of the increase in land development over the last 150 years, so many of our native birds, butterflies, and bees are in danger. We can combat the removal of native trees, bushes, and plants that these species count on by committing to plant natives in our own outdoor spaces, rather than choosing non-natives which may not provide what our wildlife needs.



If you decide to go wild with native plants this spring, you can be sure you're helping to reverse our ecosystem's dangerous course. Native

plants don't only support wildlife but also infuse nutrients back into their soil, help prevent erosion, and reduce the need for chemical fertilizers and pest sprays. Outdoor spaces filled with natives require less water because they've learned to adapt to hot Pennsylvania summers, unlike properties planted solely with turf grass and other non-native ornamental species.

What's the next step? Find the best spots in your outdoor spaces to include native plants and check out our list for some of our favorite Pennsylvania natives. And if you need help planning, planting, or maintaining your native plant landscapes, call a landscaping professional in your local Home Builders Association.

### Best Native Plants for Sun

1. **Butterfly Weed** – a bright orange flower growing two to three feet tall, a lure for butterflies and bees and resistant to deer
2. **Blazing Star** – tall purple and pink spiked flowers which attract pollinators and provide dry seeds for birds
3. **Cardinal Flower** – very tall plants with red blooms loving damp soil and supporting pollinators

### Best Plants for Partial Shade

4. **Virginia Bluebells** – early spring bloomers which attract multiple spring pollinators
5. **Goldenrods** – bright yellow flowers thriving in multiple environments through fall

6. **Eastern Columbine** – red and yellow blooms on stems up to three feet tall and loved by hummingbirds and butterflies

**Best Plants for Shade**

- 7. **White Wood Aster** – a sturdy white wildflower brightening landscapes and lasting until early fall
- 8. **Wild Geranium** – pink and lavender flowers, growing in clumps to help prevent erosion
- 9. **Wild Blue Phlox** – clustered lavender flowers which attract multiple pollinators ■



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## Landscaping

Clean up and mulch your beds this spring and consider adding some low maintenance native plants and perennials for months of color. Make sure your lawn is mowed and trimmed to keep things looking neat. If your lawn is suffering from past years of drought, an irrigation system may be a great investment to keep your lawn looking its best.

## Replacements

Switching out something as easy as a worn mailbox with a high-end beauty can make a great first impression. Changing your house numbers to something easy to read, bold, and artsy can amp up your home's façade. Even bigger replacement projects could include changing your ageing windows to energy efficient options, choosing a more attractive and safer front door, and considering a new roof with upgraded materials.



## Paint

Are your front door, shutters, and trim looking tired or worn? Painting is one of the cheapest and most effective way to improve the look of your home. Don't be afraid to use some color but avoid overly trendy shades. Top picks for 2025 are rich and earthy and can include shades of leafy green, warm brown and gray, and putty. But no need to worry, white and black remain classic exterior colors!



If you're loving your forever home or looking to sell this spring, the first impression of your property can make your guests feel welcome, increase your home's value, and inspire potential buyers to see even more! Here are some effective ways to boost your curb appeal this year:

## Lighting

Adding lighting is key to highlighting your home. Brightening your property can be as simple as adding solar spotlights along paths, choosing uplighting to feature a tree or other landscape feature, or taking on a total lighting scheme around your property's perimeter to bring both beauty and safety to the spaces. Calling in your Home Builders Association professional for a big lighting project will ensure great results.



## Additions

The most ambitious of your curb appeal projects will be adding a structure to your outdoor spaces. Think about a new and amazing front or side porch filled with colorful and relaxing seating, a cool roof over your front door to keep guests dry and enhance your roof line, or a gazebo or arbor to provide some shade and bring structure and interest to your home's first impression.



Check off your own curb appeal list to be sure your home is looking the best it can this spring and summer. And don't forget to enlist the help of your Home Builders Association for any projects which require a pro! ■



## Blue Ridge Remodeling

Are you looking for fantastic home renovation services in the Fleetwood area? Blue Ridge Remodeling will make your dreams come true when they transform your kitchen, bathrooms, basement, and any other spaces in your home with their dedication to excellence.

The professionals at Blue Ridge believe that kitchens are the heart of the home and pride themselves on custom kitchen designs highlighted by beautiful cabinets, high-end countertops, and energy-efficient appliances.

How about a beautiful bathroom? Blue Ridge Remodeling can make your outdated spaces into spots which will delight your guests and provide you with true retreats in your own home. An amazing vanity, incredible tilework, and the newest lighting can be yours with Blue Ridge.

And if you're looking for more space for the kids or hoping for a home gym, more entertainment areas, or even a new guest room, Blue Ridge Remodeling will transform your basement storage areas into a feature of your home.


With a 98-percent customer satisfaction rate, Blue Ridge Remodeling's team prides itself on completing projects on time, committing to quality craftsmanship, and making your home renovation dreams come true. ■

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# Home and Garden Trends to Inspire You in 2025

In 2025, homeowners are excited about sustainability, wellness, and creativity. Anyone dreaming or imagining beautiful living spaces will be inspired by this year's trends. Looking for help bringing the new year's trends to your home or outdoor spaces? Call a pro at your local Home Builders Association.



## Tropical Foliage and Bold Plant Displays

Plants are a guaranteed way to infuse an indoor or outdoor living space with color, and choosing something bold and tropical will bring your home the feel of a vacation paradise. Whether you add a large elephant ear plant to brighten your foyer, or decorate your sunny windowsill with caladiums, a bold plant display is the perfect way to add both nature and warmth to every room in your house.



## Gardens Under Glass

If you're searching for an easy way to green up your home, an indoor greenhouse or terrarium may be for you. These small ecosystems give the perfect environment for humidity-loving plants like ferns, moss, and orchids. Today's greenhouses can range from a tabletop beauty to a full custom cabinet with LED lighting and will add an amazing focal point to any room.



## Vertical and Urban Gardening

Indoors or out, vertical gardening is exciting homeowners with the opportunity to bring greenery to small spaces and create living art installations on any wall. A vertical garden is limited only by your imagination and can decorate a patio wall with drought-tolerant succulents or bring ready-to-pick herbs to your kitchen.

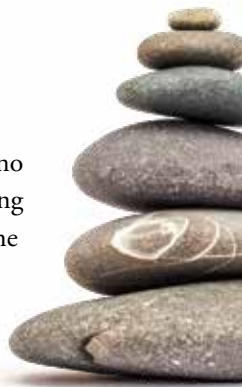
## Water-Wise Gardens

More important than ever after recent droughts is a new focus on replacing lawns with hardier succulents, ornamental grasses, and native perennials which won't demand as much summertime watering. Consider reaching out to your Home Builders Association professionals to include beautiful low-maintenance beds to your outdoor spaces or to install an irrigation system for an effective way to water your plantings.



## Wellness Spaces in Gardens

In 2025, gardens are no longer just for growing plants; they've become sanctuaries for mental and physical well-being. It's easy to imagine connecting with nature in an outdoor space surrounded by soft groundcovers and water features. And adding comfortable seating can really create a spot to meditate or relax and recharge.



## Houseplant Enthusiasm

The houseplant craze this year is all about rare and unique species, with anything from variegated monstera to jewel orchids as features. Unusual plants can act as decor, while bringing nature and improved air quality to your indoor space.



# Heller's Hardware

Heller's Hardware is nestled in the heart of Perry County, PA, and for decades served as a beacon for local craftsmen, DIY enthusiasts, gardeners, and adventurers.

Emma, a young woman with a passion for vintage homes, stopped at Heller's to get inspiration and supplies for her upcoming renovation of a historic cottage at the edge of town.

The amazing selection and knowledgeable staff in Heller's paint department were just what Emma needed to choose a farmhouse red enamel to bring her cottage's exterior back to life. And she found the perfect Simpson Structural Connectors and exterior screws in the building supplies aisle.

Emma's eyes lit up when she saw a cordless blower in Heller's power equipment section, knowing it was perfect to clean up the garden paths around the cottage, and at the checkout she saw there were other options to rent equipment she would need as her renovations progressed.

Heller's Hardware's long-standing commitment to quality products and exceptional services inspires valued customers like Emma to bring their home, garden, and outdoor visions to life. ■

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## Rock and Crevice Gardens

Inspired by nature, rock and crevice gardens are popular, not only for being beautiful, but for their ecological benefits and ease of maintenance. Rock gardens use stones to create microclimates using plants ranging from alpine species to succulents. Known for needing less water, rock gardens also add sculpture and a true feeling of nature to the landscape.

## Influencer-Inspired Gardening

Social media influencers are transforming gardening from a hobby to a mainstream movement. By sharing innovative projects, DIY tutorials, and sustainable practices, they're making gardening more fun for people of all ages and skill levels. Think upcycled planters, butterfly gardens, and flower arranging as options for anyone, and when combined with the actual tasks of gardening, bring a mood boost and renewed love of nature.

No matter which of this year's trends inspire you, including some plants you love in your indoor or outdoor spaces will help you grow in 2025. ■

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**We're all familiar with spring cleaning, but rolling up your sleeves to do some spring home maintenance can help you relax and enjoy your summer months.**

**A cold early spring day is the perfect time to start your indoor maintenance tasks.**

1. **Check out your attic and basement** for any moisture build up. Leaks or water stains can lead to mold buildup and must be addressed to keep everyone in your home safe from toxins. Strange odors can also indicate mold growth too, so keep that in mind when you investigate. Seal off any sources of water damage to prevent serious structural or health issues.
2. **Think about opening your windows** on a sunny day to let out the stale air of winter and bring in the spring. And when those windows are opened, take a minute to clean out your interior window sills.
3. **Spring is also a great time to schedule your own home safety check.** Make sure your fire extinguishers are in date, exhaust fans are working fine and change out the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.
4. **Now that your furnace will be taking a break** during warmer weather, it's time to be sure it's ready for fall temperatures. The motor, filler system, and blower all have

to be cleaned, but if these aren't tasks you can do yourself, contact an expert at your Home Builders Association.

5. **It may be time to give your home a fresh start by upgrading some important spots around the house.** Doors and windows have come a long way over the last years, and installing new models can reduce heat loss up to 50 percent and help you regulate your interior temperatures. Bumping up the insulation in your basement and crawl spaces is also a great way to improve your home's energy. And for even further energy savings, installing a programmable thermostat can keep an eye on your heating and cooling, even when you're on vacation.

**On the first sunny day of spring, think about heading outside to start your outdoor spring maintenance checks.**

1. **Clean out your gutters and downspouts** of all the leaves and debris which built up over the winter. Make sure your downspouts are all directed far from your house and that all gutters are free of holes and attached well.
2. **And while you're on the ladder, take a look at your roof.** Look for any missing or broken shingles that need to be replaced as well as other signs of wear. If algae made some stains on your roof or you have some moss growth, you

can soak both with a solution of equal parts water and bleach for 15 minutes and rinse the area off with a hose.

3. **Test run all your outside faucets** to be sure you have good water flow and check back after a bit to be sure there is no sign of leaking.
4. **While you're touring your yard, check for any concrete cracks** along your sidewalks, driveway, or around the pool. Be sure to fill smaller cracks with concrete fillers or silicone caulk, but if the cracking is severe, it may be time to replace the concrete.
5. **Be sure your deck is ready** for outdoor entertainment this year. Look for warped boards, water stains, and discoloration. Be sure there aren't dangerous exposed or rusty nails or screws and that every handrail and staircase is safe and secure. Replace any broken or warped deck boards to eliminate tripping hazards.
6. **Get your AC ready to roll** by removing accumulated grass and leaves from around the base, clean your ducts and vents, and replace the filters. Remember that clogged filters cause poor air quality in your home and reduce the energy efficiency of your unit. AC maintenance may not be for you! Consider calling an expert from your Home Builders Association for help.
7. **Check out your doors and windows** for torn screens that will invite unwanted pests inside this spring. Pick a warm day to clean outside surfaces of your windows and be sure no foliage is growing against the panes. Not only can this cause moisture buildup and a potential indoor mosquito problem, but intruders will have a harder time accessing windows which are out in the open.
8. **Make sure your sprinklers are running fine** and are free of leaks and clogged sprinkler heads. Be certain the sprinklers are aimed toward your lawn and flower beds and not wasting water on your sidewalks and driveway.
9. **Repair fences, trellises, and other wood features** around your yard. Wooden fences are likely to decay if they don't receive a regular maintenance check, but wood panels which are just dried out may be temporarily salvaged and put back together with glue.
10. **Look at the lawn and see what you can do** now to make it look great this summer. Raking the grass to eliminate thatch and dead foliage allows new seeds and fertilizer to penetrate more easily. Check out hard-wearing seed mixes if your yard is a busy place over the next months or shade-tolerant seeds for a yard with tree cover. Overseed any bare areas and add some nitrogen fertilizer to enjoy a green lawn this summer. ■

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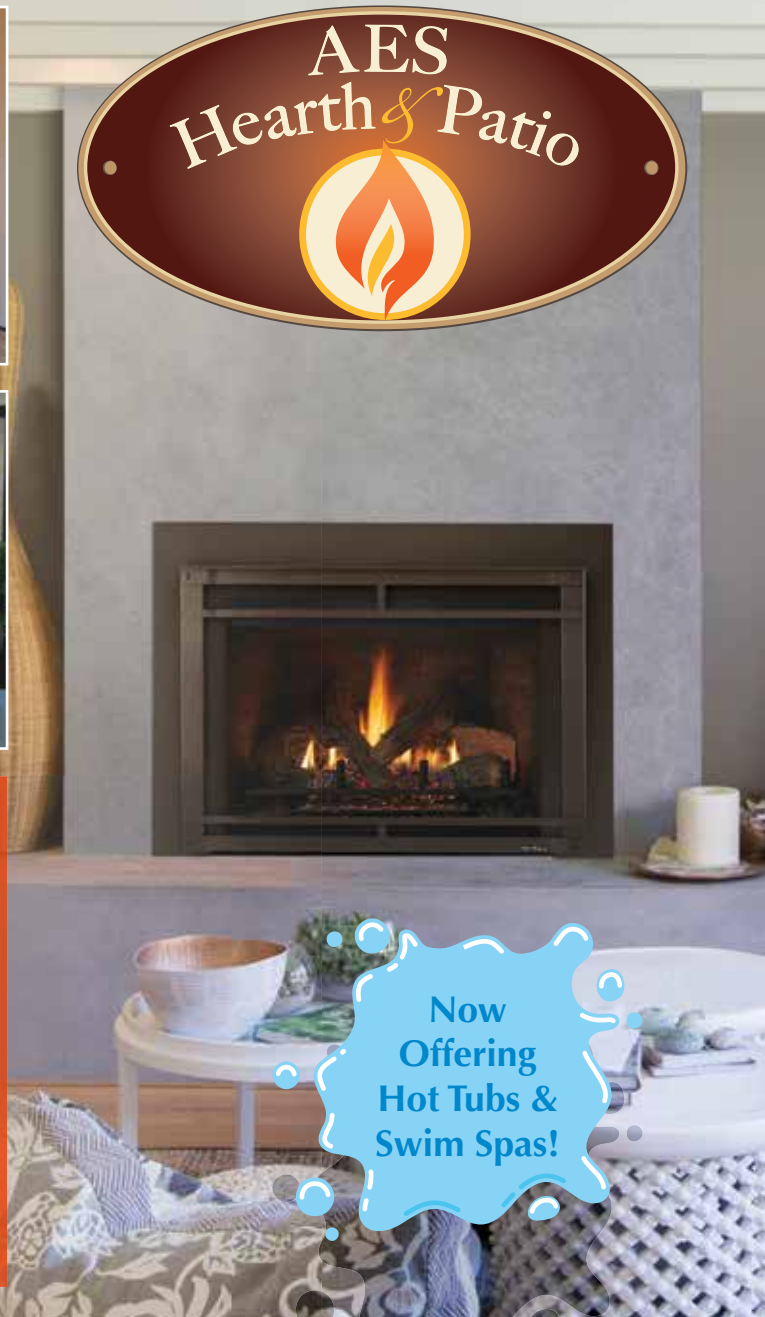


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