

To DIY or hire, that is the question

By Andi Peterson Brown

I don't know about you, but last night when I watched the same commercial from Lowe's four times in 30 minutes that kept telling me to Never Stop Improving, I have to say that it worked. They got me. All of a sudden I had a burning desire to improve something, anything. It was 9:15 at night but I wanted to jump in the car right then and there and drive to Lowe's to buy brushes and cans and sprays and plants and on and on and on...

They made it look so fun, so happy, and so relaxing to repaint the house, landscape the yard, and sandpaper the front porch. The sun was shining, everyone smiled as they worked – I mean how could you not want to sandpaper your front porch when it could bring such joy?

Sure there are lots of projects that are a-ok to stock up at Lowe's for and do-it-yourself, but many are better left to the professionals. So how do you know when to hire a professional? Hire a professional when:

- The project is elaborate or extensive. Adding on? Rebuilding kitchen cabinets? Call an expert.
- You just aren't handy with a hammer and never will be.
- You don't have the time. If you don't have the time, you will end up with 2/3 of a completed project. Trust me.



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Spring and Feng Shui

By Michele Duffy



The fresh green of spring is nicely expressed in this living room.

The Wood element and the fresh green color resembling jade governs spring in feng shui, and spring has sprung! Spring symbolizes colorful new growth, new projects, new friendships, new bonds, new beginnings and abundant health – especially when associated with the idea of family. You can think of your family as the roots of your being, your DNA, your very own new beginnings. Families are defined by the group that loves you unconditionally and may include your immediate family but also close friends or colleagues.

The Family, New Beginnings and Spring area on the Feng Shui Bagua is, from the front entrance door, the middle left area of your home or office. This is also the area that governs “little money,” or the paying of everyday bills. Oh, you say, how do I get that area moving? Easy. The number three is associated with this area, so since plants represent the wood element, place three small lucky jade plants, purple African or common purple violets on a desk or side table. Do so with the motivation and intention to

welcome upward growth in this area, to leave any difficulties of paying your daily bills in the past, and planting new possibilities for abundance moving forward. One can deepen the “activation” of the wood element that rules this area even further by choosing green pots for the plants.

Since moving water creates wood, the Family/New Beginnings area is excellent for a water feature. As long as that area is not a bedroom, a nice sounding upward directional indoor water fountain will get things moving nicely. Paint that area a soft but happy color of green to activate the wood element of spring, or place three images of a sunrise, a forest or bamboo in wooden frames on the wall. In the same area of your garden, place an outdoor water feature and a bamboo wind chime. Remember to minimize the metal in this location almost entirely, since metal is not a friend of wood and you do not want the vibrant upward growth and new beginnings of the spring season to be cut short.

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