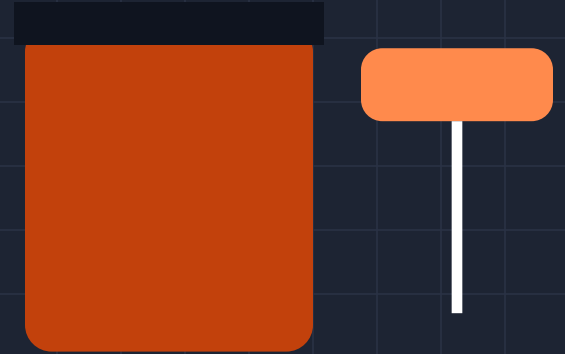




# The First Projects Workbook

Eight beginner projects, tools and safety

General DIY information. Follow tool and product instructions and wear eye protection.  
Pre-1978 homes may have lead paint: test before sanding. Leave wiring, gas and structural work to pros.  
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# Safety first

Five habits prevent most DIY injuries. Read this page before your first project.

## Every project

1. Safety glasses whenever you drill, cut, hammer or scrape
2. Cut away from your body
3. Unplug or remove the battery before changing bits
4. Clear, well-lit work area
5. Check for wires and pipes before drilling

## Ladders

1. Rated for your weight plus tools
2. Fully open with spreaders locked
3. Never stand on the top step or cap
4. Body between the rails; move the ladder, don't reach

## Older homes

- Built before 1978? Paint may contain lead
- Test before sanding, scraping or heat-stripping
- Read the EPA lead guidance at [epa.gov/lead](https://www.epa.gov/lead)

## Leave to a licensed pro

- Wiring, panels and new circuits
- Gas lines and gas appliances
- Water supply lines inside walls
- Structural changes and roofs

## Starter toolkit

Buy these first. They cover every project in this workbook.

### The first ten tools

### Have it

- |                          |                                                  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Safety glasses and work gloves                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 25-foot tape measure                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 24-inch level                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cordless drill/driver with drill and driver bits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Multi-bit screwdriver                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 16 oz claw hammer                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Utility knife and spare blades                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Stud finder (with wire detection)                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adjustable wrench and slip-joint pliers          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Step ladder                                      |

# Eight beginner projects

Start with the first card and work down. Full step-by-step guides are at [easyhometasks.com/projects](https://easyhometasks.com/projects).

## Patch nail holes and small drywall holes

Beginner · 30 min plus drying · \$10 to \$25

### Tools

- Lightweight spackle or joint compound
- 2-inch and 6-inch putty knives
- Self-adhesive mesh patches
- Fine sanding sponge
- Primer and matching paint

### Steps

1. Press a little lightweight spackle into the hole with a putty knife
2. Scrape the knife flat across so almost nothing is left on the surface
3. Let it dry (lightweight spackle often dries in under an hour)
4. Sand lightly with a fine sanding sponge and wipe off the dust
5. Prime the spot, then paint

Done on: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

## Hang pictures and mirrors securely

Beginner · 20 min · \$5 to \$20

### Tools

- Tape measure, pencil and level
- Picture hooks or anchors rated for the weight
- Hammer or drill
- Painter's tape

### Steps

1. A common rule: center of the art about 57 to 60 inches from the floor
2. Over furniture, leave about 6 to 10 inches between the furniture and the frame
3. Make a paper template the size of the frame to try positions with painter's tape

Done on: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

## Fix a squeaky or sticking door

Beginner · 15 to 45 min · Under \$10

### Tools

- Screwdriver
- Hammer and a nail
- White lithium grease
- A few 3-inch wood screws

### Steps

1. Close the door and tap the hinge pin up with a nail and hammer from below
2. Remove one pin at a time so the door stays hung
3. Wipe the pin and coat it with a little white lithium grease or petroleum jelly
4. Tap it back in and swing the door to spread the grease

Done on: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

## Replace a showerhead

Beginner · 20 min · \$20 to \$80

### Tools

- New showerhead
- Thread seal (PTFE) tape
- Adjustable wrench or pliers
- A cloth to protect the finish

### Steps

1. Close the drain so nothing small falls in
2. Unscrew the old head counterclockwise; wrap the shower arm in a cloth if you need pliers
3. Clean old tape and mineral deposits from the arm threads
4. Wrap new thread seal tape clockwise two or three times around the threads
5. Screw on the new head by hand, then snug it gently; don't overtighten
6. Run the water and check for drips; tighten slightly if needed

Done on: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

## Install a curtain rod

Beginner · 30 to 45 min · \$20 to \$60

### Tools

- Tape measure, level and pencil
- Drill/driver
- Brackets and screws (anchors if needed)
- Step ladder

### Steps

1. Mount higher and wider than the window frame: about 4 to 6 inches above and 4 to 10 inches beyond each side makes windows look bigger
2. Measure the same distance up from the frame at both ends and check with a level

Done on: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

## Adjust cabinet doors and replace hardware

Beginner · 30 min to 2 hours · \$0 to \$150

### Tools

- Phillips screwdriver
- Tape measure
- Drill and bit (for new holes)
- Cardboard or scrap for a template
- Painter's tape

### Steps

1. Side-to-side screw (usually the one closest to the door edge): moves the door left or right to even out gaps
2. Depth screw: moves the door in or out from the cabinet
3. Height: loosen the mounting screws, slide the door up or down, then tighten
4. Make small quarter turns and check after each one

Done on: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

### Assemble flat-pack furniture without the stress

Beginner · 1 to 3 hours · Free (tools you have)

#### Tools

- The included hardware and Allen key
- Phillips screwdriver or drill/driver
- Rubber mallet
- Cups to sort hardware

#### Steps

1. Open the box on a rug or the box itself to protect panels and floors
2. Count hardware against the list and sort it into cups or a muffin tin
3. Read every step once before starting

Done on: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

### Re-caulk a tub or shower

Weekend · 1 hour plus curing · \$15 to \$30

#### Tools

- Tub and shower caulk
- Caulk gun
- Utility knife or caulk removal tool
- Rubbing alcohol and rags
- Painter's tape
- Disposable gloves

#### Steps

1. Cut along both edges of the old bead with a utility knife or caulk removal tool
2. Pull and scrape it out; a plastic scraper protects tub finishes
3. Clean the joint with rubbing alcohol to remove soap film
4. Let it dry completely, ideally overnight

Done on: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

# Paint worksheet

Measure each wall's width and the height from floor to ceiling. Then subtract doors and windows.

| Wall                       | Width (ft) | Height (ft) | Area (W x H) |
|----------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| Wall 1                     |            |             |              |
| Wall 2                     |            |             |              |
| Wall 3                     |            |             |              |
| Wall 4                     |            |             |              |
| Total wall area            |            |             |              |
| Minus doors (x 20 sq ft)   |            |             |              |
| Minus windows (x 15 sq ft) |            |             |              |
| Paintable area             |            |             |              |

Gallons = paintable area x number of coats / coverage on the can (often 350 to 400 sq ft per gallon). Round up to the nearest quart. Or use the calculator at [easyhometasks.com/paint-calculator](https://www.easyhometasks.com/paint-calculator).

## Colors and finishes

| Room | Brand | Color name and code | Finish | Date |
|------|-------|---------------------|--------|------|
|      |       |                     |        |      |
|      |       |                     |        |      |
|      |       |                     |        |      |
|      |       |                     |        |      |
|      |       |                     |        |      |
|      |       |                     |        |      |
|      |       |                     |        |      |

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Write down what you did, what it cost and what you'd do differently next time.

[illegible]

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