



Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

## Create Your Own Man Cave or She Shed



**N**ot sure what to do with that extra room, completed basement or external space on your property? A “man cave” or “she shed” could be the ultimate addition to your home.

An enhanced man cave or she shed allows you or guests to kick back and relax, transforming an unused space into a central hub, especially if you include these must-haves.

- 1 Quality entertainment system:** Make sure your space has modern entertainment offerings. If you're a TV or movie fan, make sure you include a sizeable screen so you can enjoy your media. If you're a music fan, a proper sound or stereo system is a must.
- 2 Warm lighting:** Don't settle for basic overhead bulbs. Invest in proper fixtures with ambient fade lighting, and don't look past other accents like table lamps and uplighting.
- 3 Activity space:** Whether you love games or crafts, having space dedicated to these hobbies is a great addition. Consider including game tables, like billiards or foosball, or a creative craft nook to allow your interests to take center stage in the space.
- 4 Beverage storage:** Invest in a proper mini fridge with a glass door or, even better, a mini cart. If you have the space, a minibar is sure to impress.
- 5 Comfortable seating:** Forego the old couch and recliners for contemporary furniture to give your space a more refined look. Don't be afraid to splurge on a leather sectional and a stylish armchair or two. Your guests will take notice.

## Choosing the Best De-icer

Ice on your porch steps, sidewalk and driveway can be more than just an annoyance. To avoid delays on your work commute and potential injury, keep some de-icer on hand this winter. The question is, which one to choose?

**Sodium chloride:** Also known as rock salt, sodium chloride works well when temperatures are above 15 degrees. But be careful—it can also damage your lawn and concrete surfaces and can cause health issues if your pets ingest it.

**Calcium chloride:** This de-icing salt works in sub-zero temperatures, down to minus 20 degrees. Considered by many to be the best deicing option for homeowners, calcium chloride can still be potentially hazardous to plants and animals.

**Magnesium chloride:** Effective at temperatures as low as 5 degrees, magnesium chloride doesn't release as much chloride as rock salt or calcium chloride, making it the least toxic of these options.

**Anti-icer spray:** If you'd rather be proactive about de-icing, you can use this chemical spray on surfaces when winter storms are heading your way. Many brands of these liquid de-icers claim to be safe for lawns and nontoxic to animals, which makes them popular among pet owners.

**Sand and a shovel:** If you're anti-chemical or just looking to take an old-school approach, sand won't melt your ice, but it will give your boots some grip so you don't fall while clearing your driveway of ice with a shovel.





**DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT BUYING OR SELLING A HOME? PLEASE MENTION MY NAME.**

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## What To Do if Your House Floods



**N**avigating the aftermath of a flood is challenging and stressful. This guide offers essential tips for what to do in the unfortunate event of a house flood.

**Stop water flow:** Identify and stop the source of water to prevent further damage to your home. Turn off the main valve if it's a non-natural flood. Locating this valve before problems arise will save time when you need to shut it off quickly.

**Evacuate safely:** In the case of a sewage leak or burst pipe, evacuate everyone to a safe, dry area outside. If the flooding is caused by a weather event, follow local news or authorities for temporary shelter information.

**Turn off power:** After stopping water flow and ensuring everyone is safe, turn off all electrical systems

to eliminate potential safety hazards. Avoid water contact when accessing the fuse box and call a professional if you need help.

**Seek assistance:** Once you've cut the electricity, contact your insurance company to initiate the claims process and determine whether they expect you to wait for an adjuster before beginning cleanup and repairs.

**Document damage/cleanup:** Prior to cleaning or repairing anything, use your phone to thoroughly document any home damage for insurance purposes. When cleaning, be cautious and wear protective gear to protect yourself from any potentially hazardous material in floodwater.

In addition, always remember to stay updated on local news reports, follow the guidance of emergency services for accurate, current information during flood conditions and dial 911 for any medical emergencies.

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