



Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

Simple Ways to Make Your Backyard More Mosquito-Resistant

Mosquitoes can quickly turn a relaxing backyard evening into an itchy annoyance. While you may not be able to eliminate them completely, a few smart habits can make your outdoor space much less inviting.

Try these steps:

- 1 Remove standing water.**
Empty buckets, saucers, toys, birdbaths and other containers where water collects. Even small amounts can become breeding spots.
- 2 Keep the yard trimmed.**
Mosquitoes like shady, damp areas. Mow regularly and trim overgrown shrubs or tall grass near seating areas.
- 3 Use fans outdoors.**
Mosquitoes are weak flyers, so a portable fan near your patio table can help keep them away.
- 4 Check screens and doors.**
Repair holes in window or porch screens to keep mosquitoes from moving indoors.
- 5 Choose repellents wisely.**
When spending time outside, use an EPA-registered insect repellent and follow label instructions.

A mosquito-resistant yard starts with consistency. Walk your outdoor space weekly, especially after rain, and look for places water might collect. With regular upkeep, you can make your backyard more comfortable for summer evenings, cookouts and quiet mornings outside.



When to Repair vs. Replace Your Fence

A fence does more than mark your property line. It adds privacy, security and curb appeal, which is why damage can be frustrating. The key is knowing when a simple repair is enough and when replacement makes more sense.

Small problems are often worth repairing. A cracked board, loose hinge or sagging gate can usually be fixed without replacing the entire fence. If the posts are still sturdy and the damage is limited to one area, repair is usually the more budget-friendly choice.

Consider replacement if you notice:

- ▶ Multiple leaning sections
- ▶ Rot at the base of several posts
- ▶ Widespread warping, cracking or missing boards
- ▶ Storm damage across large portions of the fence
- ▶ Repeated repairs that no longer hold up

Age matters too. If your fence is nearing the end of its expected lifespan, replacing it may save money over time. A newer fence with isolated damage, however, may only need targeted fixes.

Before deciding, walk the full fence line and take photos of problem areas. This gives you a clearer view of the damage and helps if you need a contractor estimate. A well-maintained fence protects both your yard and your home's overall appearance.

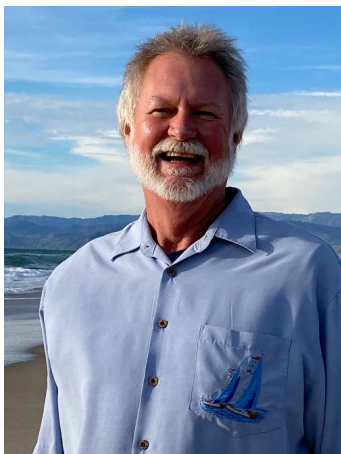


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What Homeowners Should Know About Pool Safety

Pools are a summer favorite, but safety should always come first. Whether you have a backyard pool or visit one often, a few basic precautions can help prevent accidents.

Q: What is the most important pool safety rule?

Active supervision. Children should always be watched closely in or near water, even if they know how to swim. Phones, conversations and quick trips inside can wait.

Q: What safety features should homeowners consider?

Barriers matter. A secure fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate can help keep children from entering the pool area unsupervised. Door alarms, pool covers and safety locks can add extra protection.

Q: What about pool equipment?

Make sure drain covers are secure and compliant with current safety standards. Loose or broken covers should be repaired right away.

Q: How can families prepare for emergencies?

Keep a phone nearby, learn CPR and make sure rescue equipment is easy to reach.

Pool safety is not about one single step. It works best as layers of protection—supervision, barriers, rules and readiness. With the right precautions, your pool can stay a fun, refreshing part of summer.



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