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IN FULL COLOUR

Edited by

Jeff Howell

DIY columnist, The Sunday Telegraph



DIY
ALL-IN-ONE
FOR
DUMMIES®
2ND EDITION

**by Roy Barnhart, James Carey, Morris Carey,
Gene Hamilton, Katie Hamilton,
Don R. Prestly and Jeff Strong**

Edited by Jeff Howell

 **WILEY**

A John Wiley and Sons, Ltd, Publication

DIY All-in-One For Dummies,[®] 2nd Edition

Published by
John Wiley & Sons, Ltd
The Atrium
Southern Gate
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 8SQ
England

E-mail (for orders and customer service enquires): cs-books@wiley.co.uk

Visit our Home Page on www.wiley.com

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Published by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, Chichester, West Sussex

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data: A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN-13: 978-0-470-97450-6

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Bell & Bain Ltd., Glasgow

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



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Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our Dummies online registration form located at www.dummies.com/register/.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

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Cover Photos: © Robert Cocquyt

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Contents at a Glance

.....

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Book I: Planning Your Home Improvement Projects</i>	5
Chapter 1: Gearing Up for Your DIY Adventures	7
Chapter 2: Being Safe and Prepared	19
Chapter 3: Working with (And within) a Budget.....	27
<i>Book II: Basic Home Maintenance and Improvement</i>	37
Chapter 1: Repairing Walls and Putting Up Shelves.....	39
Chapter 2: Windows Don't Have to Be a Pane.....	59
Chapter 3: Doors: An Open-and-Shut Case	79
Chapter 4: Roofs and Walls.....	95
Chapter 5: Dealing with Damp.....	113
Chapter 6: Electrical Repairs and Replacements.....	119
<i>Book III: Painting and Wallpapering</i>	137
Chapter 1: Planning Your Painting Project	139
Chapter 2: Preparing Surfaces for Painting	157
Chapter 3: Painting, Finishing, and Cleaning Up.....	173
Chapter 4: Choosing Wallpaper and Preparing Walls	195
Chapter 5: Hanging Wallpaper	211
<i>Book IV: Carpentry, Woodworking, and Flooring</i>	231
Chapter 1: Flooring: Keeping a Leg Up on Foot Traffic	233
Chapter 2: Drilling, Driving, Fastening, and Gluing.....	257
Chapter 3: Understanding the Carpentry Process	283
Chapter 4: Finishing Wood	295
<i>Book V: Plumbing</i>	313
Chapter 1: The Plumbing System in Your Home	315
Chapter 2: Heating, Ventilating, and Insulating Systems	333
Chapter 3: Plumbing Materials and Tools	341
Chapter 4: Unblocking a Sink or Bath Waste Pipe	359
Chapter 5: Unblocking and Fixing a Toilet.....	371
Chapter 6: Fixing a Dripping Tap	383
<i>Index</i>	395

Table of Contents

.....

Introduction 1

Foolish Assumptions.....	1
How to Use This Book.....	1
How This Book Is Organised	2
Book I: Planning Your Home Improvement Projects.....	2
Book II: Basic Home Maintenance and Improvement	2
Book III: Painting and Wallpapering	2
Book IV: Carpentry, Woodworking, and Flooring.....	2
Book V: Plumbing.....	3
Icons Used in This Book	3
Where to Go from Here.....	4

Book 1: Planning Your Home Improvement Projects 5

Chapter 1: Gearing Up for Your DIY Adventures 7

Taking Everything into Account	8
Calculating the cost	8
Tallying the time	8
Scrutinising your skills.....	9
Hiring Help the Smart Way.....	9
Finding a good builder	10
Covering all your bases.....	11
Gearing Up for DIY Adventures	13
Totting Up the Top Tools	13
Gizmos and Gear.....	16
Tools: To Buy or To Hire?	18

Chapter 2: Being Safe and Prepared 19

Practising Fire Safety.....	19
Common sense can prevent fires.....	20
Smoke alarms: Gotta have 'em	20
Fire extinguishers	23
Preventing Carbon Monoxide Danger in the Home.....	23
Protecting Your Home from Intruders.....	24
Maintaining Electrical Safety.....	25
Testing Residual Current Circuit Breakers	26

Chapter 3: Working with (And within) a Budget27

Establishing the Scope of the Project	27
Looking at Things Room by Room	28
Getting Estimates and Prices	30
Pricing materials	31
Sticking to your budget	32
Allowing for fun (and your mental health!)	32
Considering Financing Options.....	33
Remortgaging your home	33
Buying with low- or no-interest credit cards.....	34
Watching Every Penny to Avoid Overspending.....	35
Reviewing expenses regularly.....	35
Hitting the sales	35
Collecting items yourself	36

Book II: Basic Home Maintenance and Improvement.....37**Chapter 1: Repairing Walls and Putting Up Shelves39**

Working on Walls.....	39
Filling cracks.....	39
Repairing nail pops.....	42
Patching holes	43
Repairing sagging plaster on walls and ceilings	46
Decking the walls	48
Building Shelves.....	51
Putting up a simple wall shelf	51
Installing a shelving system.....	53
Adding a wire shelf system to a wardrobe	55

Chapter 2: Windows Don't Have to Be a Pane59

Know Your Windows.....	59
Window Maintenance.....	61
Heave-ho: Unsticking a Stuck Window.....	62
Replacing Sash Cords.....	64
Crash! Replacing a Broken Window Pane.....	66
Wood-frame window.....	67
Metal-frame window	69
What a Rotter: Repairing a Rotted Windowsill	70
Energy-Saving Projects	72
Weather-stripping, step by step.....	72
Sealing, step by step.....	74
Window Enhancements and Add-ons	75
Installing a window blind	75
Installing a venetian blind.....	76
Installing curtain rods and hardware.....	78

Chapter 3: Doors: An Open-and-Shut Case	79
Maintaining Locks and Hinges	79
Lubricating hinges	80
Lubricating door locks	80
Tightening loose hinges	83
Fixing Folding Doors	84
Keeping Sliding Doors Smooth Operators	85
Getting your patio door to slide better	85
Maintaining sliding wardrobe doors	86
Locking Up	88
Replacing standard door locks	88
Installing a deadbolt	88
Securing sliding patio doors	91
Maintaining Garage Doors	92
Chapter 4: Roofs and Walls	95
Your Roof: The Fifth Wall of Your Home	95
Cleanliness is next to godliness	96
The naked truth about flashing	97
Fixing Slipped or Damaged Slates and Tiles	98
Safety first	98
Replacing a slate	99
Replacing a tile	101
Putting Your Mind in the Gutter	102
Cleaning gutters and drainpipes	102
Patching leaks	102
Cladding: Armour for Your House	103
Treating wood cladding	104
Cleaning PVC-U cladding	104
Maintaining aluminium cladding	104
Maintaining and Repairing Brick Walls	105
Cleaning	105
Repointing	106
Replacing damaged bricks	108
Repairing render	109
Repairing roughcast and pebbledash	110
Chapter 5: Dealing with Damp	113
Is a Fungus Amongus?	113
Preventing Moisture from Building Up under Your Home	114
Rooting out the cause of moisture	115
Using gutters to reduce moisture	115
Draining water away from the house	116
Lowering ground levels	116
Giving the problem some air	116
Saying 'oui' to a French drain	117



Chapter 6: Electrical Repairs and Replacements119

Replacing a Fuse and Resetting a Circuit Breaker 120
Wiring Switches and Sockets 122
 Swapping a light switch 123
 Replacing a standard switch with a dimmer switch 127
Replacing Double Sockets 129
 Replacing a standard socket 130
 Replacing a socket with a residual current circuit breaker 130
Repairing a Faulty Lamp 131
Replacing a Ceiling Rose and Bulb Holder 133
Wiring a Telephone Extension 135

Book III: Painting and Wallpapering 137

Chapter 1: Planning Your Painting Project139

A Primer on Finishes 139
 Water-based or oil-based? 140
 First things first: Primers and sealers 140
 Categorising finishes 141
Choosing an Exterior Finish 142
 Exterior water-based paint 142
 Exterior oil-based paint 143
 Paint versus stain 143
 Exterior stains and clear coatings 143
Choosing the Right Interior Paint 144
Finding the Perfect Interior Stain 144
Estimating How Much Paint to Buy 145
The Workhorses of Painting: Brushes and Rollers 147
 Brushes 147
 Rollers 149
 Foam painting pads 151
Brushing Up on Techniques 151
 It's all in the wrist 151
 May I cut in? 153
Roller Techniques 154

Chapter 2: Preparing Surfaces for Painting157

Preparing Exterior Surfaces 157
 Scrubbing the house down 160
 Battling mildew stains 161
 Cleaning chalking surfaces 162
 Cleaning stucco, render, and other masonry 162
 Sealing cracks and holes with caulk 163
 Patching surface cavities before painting 163

Preparing Interior Surfaces	164
Cleaning a room for painting.....	164
Preparing kitchens and bathrooms for painting	165
Clearing the way.....	165
Smoothing the walls	166
Repairing and preparing to recoat painted wood	167
Making final preparations	169
Chapter 3: Painting, Finishing, and Cleaning Up	173
Preparing to Paint the Exterior of Your Home.....	173
Using ladders safely outdoors.....	174
Scooting safely up scaffolding.....	175
Consulting the weather forecast.....	176
Planning your painting sequence	177
Making last-minute preparations.....	177
Tooling up for the job.....	178
Priming the surface.....	178
Painting the Exterior of Your Home	179
Cladding	179
Windows and doors.....	181
Finishing things off	182
Painting the Interior of Your Home	183
Ceilings and walls	184
Decorative paint effects	185
Woodwork.....	185
Doors	188
Putting on the finishing touches	188
Cleaning Up the Mess.....	190
Choosing tools to help you	190
Using the three-container approach	191
Chapter 4: Choosing Wallpaper and Preparing Walls	195
Choices, Choices: Looking at Different Wallpapers	196
The front	196
The back.....	197
Selecting a pattern that suits the room	198
Matching repeating patterns.....	198
Buying Wallpaper	200
Sketching the layout	200
Estimating the number of rolls to buy	200
Tooling Up for the Task.....	201
Choosing Your Wallpaper Adhesive	202
Clearing and Cleaning the Room	202
Removing Wallpaper	203
Knowing what you're up against.....	204
Preparing for the mess.....	205
Gathering tools and supplies for removing wallpaper.....	205
Choosing a removal technique	206
Finishing off	208

Chapter 5: Hanging Wallpaper	211
Plan Before You Hang	211
Locating seams.....	211
Working around wonky ceilings and walls	212
Finding a starting point.....	212
At Last You're Ready to Paper.....	214
Cutting strips of wallpaper	214
Pasting the wallpaper	215
Hanging the wallcovering	217
Trimming the paper.....	218
Smoothing seams.....	219
Papering around awkward obstacles	219
Papering inside corners	222
Papering outside corners.....	223
Applying the final strip.....	223
Quick Fixes for Wallpaper	224
Sticking down seams	224
Repairing a tear or stained area.....	224
Border Incidents	226
Making your borders straight as an arrow	227
Hanging borders.....	227
Using corner mitre cuts on borders	228

Book IV: Carpentry, Woodworking, and Flooring 231

Chapter 1: Flooring: Keeping a Leg Up on Foot Traffic	233
The Subfloor: A Solid Base	233
Fixing low spots in the subfloor.....	234
Making repairs to subflooring.....	234
Understanding underlay	235
Hardwood Flooring.....	236
Refurbishing: When hardwood only needs a touch-up.....	236
Refinishing: Making your floor look new again	237
Repairing damaged hardwood flooring.....	239
Replacing a Wooden Floor.....	242
Choosing the right flooring type for your project	242
Installing a prefinished hardwood floor – the way the pros do it!.....	242
Ceramic Tile	244
Replacing a damaged tile	244
Replacing cracked or missing grout.....	245
Installing a ceramic tile floor	246
Sheet Vinyl Flooring	249
Using a template to cut your piece.....	249

Carpet.....	251
Laying carpet with underfelt	251
Laying cushion-backed carpet	252
Patching a hole in carpeting.....	252
Silencing Squeaks	253
Fixing a squeak from below	253
Fixing a squeak from above.....	255
Chapter 2: Drilling, Driving, Fastening, and Gluing	257
Trial Assembly Pays Off.....	257
Drilling and Power Driving	258
Accessorising your drill/driver.....	259
Watch your speed!.....	260
Drilling techniques.....	262
Driving Screws	262
The Nail Hammer: The Quintessential Carpentry Tool	264
Taking precautions	265
Driving nails (into wood, not from the shop).....	266
Putting on the finishing touches	268
Pulling nails	269
Fastening with Staples	272
Getting Down to Nuts and Bolts	272
Pliers: Grippy, grabby, and pointy.....	272
Spanners: A plethora of options	273
Clamping Stuff Together	274
Getting Sticky with It: Adhesives and Glue.....	276
Cluing in to gluing: Understanding how glue works.....	276
Working with wood glue	276
Choosing contact cement	277
Relying on resin glues	278
Honing in on hot glue	279
Guns for Pacifists.....	280
Hot glue gun.....	280
Caulking gun	281
Chapter 3: Understanding the Carpentry Process	283
Following Plans: Making Sense of Diagrams, Dimensions, and Procedures	283
Checking out your materials list.....	284
Numbers, give me numbers: Measured drawings	284
Putting the pieces together: Using a procedures list.....	286
Creating a Cutting List	287
Selecting the best section of the board	288
Organising your cutting list.....	289
Preparing the Board for Milling.....	289

Making the Cut	290
Putting It All Together.....	291
Preparing for assembly	291
Dry-fitting	292
Applying the glue	292
Clamping	293
Squaring up the parts and verifying flatness.....	293
Cleaning up your mess	294
Letting it sit.....	294

Chapter 4: Finishing Wood 295

Filling Holes and Cracks.....	295
Fixing small imperfections.....	295
Dealing with big holes	296
Raising dents	298
Smoothing Out Wood.....	298
Sanding.....	298
Scraping	300
Adding Colour with Stains and Paints	300
Pigment stains	301
Dyes	303
Paints.....	304
Protecting Your Work with a Topcoat	305
Shellac	305
Oil.....	307
Wax	308
Varnish and oil-based polyurethane	310
Water-based polyurethane	311

Book V: Plumbing..... 313

Chapter 1: The Plumbing System in Your Home 315

Figuring Out When to Do It Yourself.....	315
Knowing When to Call a Pro.....	316
Working Out a Plumbing Contract	318
Understanding Building Regulations, Water Regulations, and Bylaws.....	318
A River Runs through It	319
Getting Water to Your House.....	321
The main shutoff valve or stop cock.....	322
The water meter.....	323
Figuring Out Your Soil-and-Vent Pipes	324
Locating Shutoff Valves	325
Barring water from the bathroom	325
Keeping water out of the kitchen.....	329
Taking it outside	331

Chapter 2: Heating, Ventilating, and Insulating Systems	333
Looking After Your Central Heating	333
Gauging the pressure	334
Bleeding the radiators	334
Ventilation: Letting You and Your House Breathe	335
Interior ventilation	335
Structural ventilation	336
Insulating Your Loft	337
Upgrading loft insulation	338
Upgrading suspended timber ground floors	339
Chapter 3: Plumbing Materials and Tools	341
Finding Replacement Parts	341
Common Plumbing Supplies	343
Finding the Right Water Supply Pipe	346
Copper pipe	346
Galvanised steel pipe	347
Plastic pipe	349
Buying Drainage Pipes and Fittings	349
Cast iron pipes	349
Plastic pipes	349
Stocking Up on Valves	350
Using Plumbing Tools	352
Basic woodworking tools	352
Tools for measuring	353
Wrenches, spanners, and pliers	353
Pipe clamps	355
Pipe cutting and bending tools	356
Plungers and augers	357
Chapter 4: Unblocking a Sink or Bath Waste Pipe	359
Unblocking a Sink or Bath Waste Pipe	359
Removing the sink trap	360
Taking the plunge with a bath or sink drain	361
Charming the drain with a snake	362
Unblocking a Tap Aerator	364
Unblocking a Waste Disposal Unit	365
Cleaning and Adjusting a Drain Stopper	367
Trip-lever drain	367
Pop-up drain	369
Chapter 5: Unblocking and Fixing a Toilet	371
Diagnosing the Problem (Yuck!)	371
Clearing a Blocked Toilet	372
Using a plunger	372
Using a toilet auger	373
Using a snake	374

Clearing the Main Pipe.....	375
When the blockage is beyond the fixture	375
Still blocked? Call a plumber	377
Nice to Meet Loo: Fixing Your Toilet's Parts	378
Solving Ball Float Valve Problems	379
Addressing Ballcock Problems	380
Chapter 6: Fixing a Dripping Tap	383
Stopping a Compression Tap Leak.....	383
Replacing a worn washer	384
Replacing the valve seat	385
Stopping a leak from a tap handle	386
Stopping a Washerless Tap Leak.....	387
Ball-type tap.....	388
Cartridge-type tap.....	389
Ceramic disk-type tap.....	391
Fixing a Dish Sprayer.....	392
Index.....	395

Introduction



Welcome to DIY and Home Improvement All-in-One For Dummies, the only repair manual you'll ever need. One glance through this book and you quickly see that it's not overloaded with technical details and obscure advice that you'll never want or need to know. Our goal was to compile a book that explains, in a fun and easy-to-understand style, how to complete a wide range of projects. This anybody-can-do-it approach appeals to fledging do-it-yourselfers and seasoned handymen and -women. We encourage you to dust off your toolbox and tackle simple repairs and improvements using our idiot-proof instructions.

Basic steps and illustrations throughout the book walk you through the key points of maintaining and improving your home. These are tried-and-tested solutions to everyday home repair and improvement questions.

Foolish Assumptions

In this book, we make a few assumptions about who you are. We assume that you care about the appearance and condition of your home. We don't think that you're a home improvement fanatic or that you're a DIY expert – you don't need to be. All you need is this book, the right tools, and a desire to see your home be safe, functional, and attractive both inside and out.

How to Use This Book

You can use this book in two ways:

- ✔ If you want information about a specific topic, such as stopping cold draughts with weather-stripping or cleaning out gutters, skip to that section using the index or table of contents and get your answer pronto.
- ✔ If you want to be a home improvement guru, read the whole book from cover to cover. You'll end up knowing so much that Handy Andy will be calling you for advice.

How This Book Is Organised

This book is actually five books in one. The chapters within each of those books cover specific topics in detail. You can read each chapter or book without reading what came before, so you don't have to waste time reading what doesn't apply to your situation. Occasionally, we refer you to another area in the book where you find more details on a particular subject.

Book I: Planning Your Home Improvement Projects

Undertaking a home improvement project without planning is a recipe for disaster. This book walks you through the decision of whether to take on a task yourself or hire a professional, helps you gather the tools you need to do most home improvement projects, and gives you important tips for staying safe.

Book II: Basic Home Maintenance and Improvement

This book takes you through the various parts of a home, from the foundation to the roof, and tells you how to make common repairs. Included are chapters on window and door maintenance.

Book III: Painting and Wallpapering

A simple coat of paint or layer of wallpaper can have an amazing impact on how a home looks. This book helps you choose the best materials for your situation and get them up onto your walls like a pro. The chapters on painting cover both the interior and the exterior of a house.

Book IV: Carpentry, Woodworking, and Flooring

Working with wood really isn't too difficult, we promise. This book talks about the basics of carpentry and woodworking, from fixing pieces together to sanding and finishing wood projects. You'll find chapters covering the processes of repairing and installing new flooring.

Book V: Plumbing

Plumbing may be an area that you've always found a little bit intimidating – many homeowners do. But when you understand how everything fits together, plumbing repairs aren't any more difficult than other home maintenance projects. In this book, you find information about two major, vexing plumbing problems: Leaks and blockages. Before you call a plumber in a panic, check these chapters – you may be able to fix the problem yourself and save a packet.

Icons Used in This Book



We use the familiar For Dummies icons to help guide you through the material in this book.

Get on target with these great time-saving, money-saving, and sanity-saving tips.



Commit to memory these key tidbits of information that come into play in various aspects of your home improvement adventures.



We don't want to scare you off, but DIY is not for the accident-prone. This icon alerts you to potential hazards and how to steer clear of them. We also use this symbol to mark advice for making your home a safer place.



Let this icon serve as a warning that you're treading in trouble-prone waters. Why should you have to learn from your own mistakes when you can learn just as well from others'?



Some projects and repairs require the skills, experience, and know-how that only a professional can offer. Novices and weekend DIYers take note. This icon reminds you not to bite off more than you can chew.



Most people want their toilets to flush, but some aren't happy until they know *how* the toilet flushes. This book doesn't bombard you with loads of technical trivia, but some background tidbits can be useful. If you crave obscure details that most normal people don't care about, seek out these icons. If you'd rather live in ignorant bliss, by all means skip these little diversions.

Where to Go from Here

We don't care whether you start with the Table of Contents, the Index, Book V, or even Chapter 1 (what a novel idea). What's important is that you get going. A better home is just around the corner!

Book I

Planning Your Home Improvement Projects



"George installed the fridge, the freezer, the washing machine, the cooker, the hob oven, the built-in oven, the dishwasher, and I installed the chef."

In this book . . .

Where do you start? Can you do it yourself? What materials, tools, and knowledge do you need? How much will it cost, and how do you keep from going mad in the process? Dig into these chapters that frame answers to these knotty questions.

Collecting basic household tools and the right stuff for specific jobs doesn't have to be a struggle. Venturing into the local hardware store or home improvement centre need not be a struggle – although with the size of today's DIY superstores, you may need to pack a picnic.

Whether you want to estimate the time and cost involved in a job, or check out the possibility of adding more hands-on adventures to your to-do list, you can build comfort and confidence with a cruise through this book.

Here are the contents of Book I at a glance.

Chapter 1: Gearing Up for Your DIY Adventures	7
Chapter 2: Being Safe and Prepared	19
Chapter 3: Working with (And within) a Budget	27

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