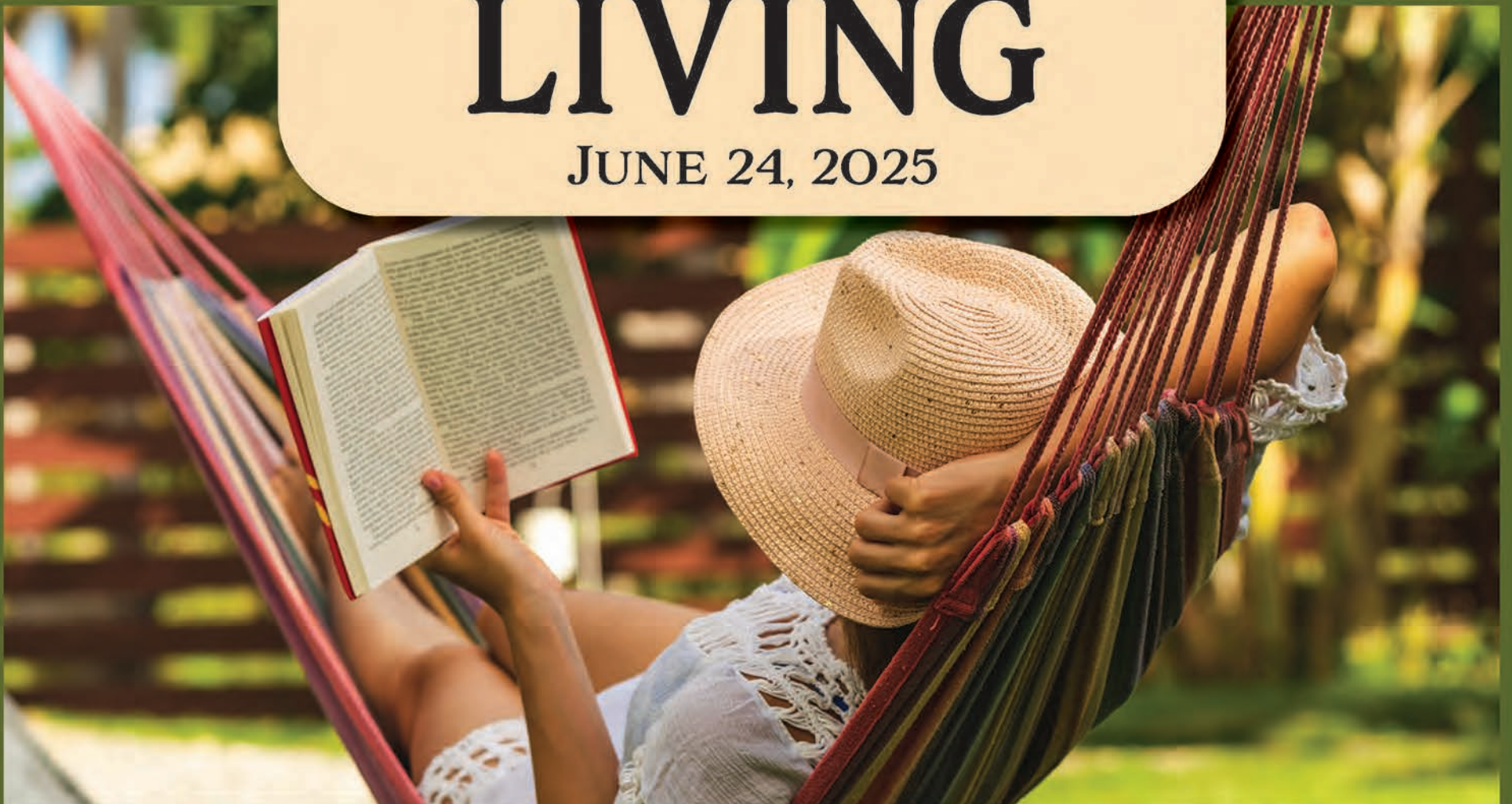




OUTDOOR LIVING

JUNE 24, 2025



a special section of The Derrick. / The News-Herald

Safe summer fun in the sun

(Family Features) Summer is the season of sun-kissed memories — backyard barbecues, sandy beaches, bike rides and late-night stargazing. However, the warmer months bring unique safety challenges that can catch active families off guard if they're not prepared.

From sunburns to scraped knees and dehydration to bug bites, summer's surprises don't have to slow you down. With a few simple precautions and the right tools on hand — like reliable first-aid essentials — you can make safety second nature and keep your focus where it belongs: on making the most of every sunny moment.

Here are a few smart, easy tips from the experts at CURAD to help your family stay protected from the sun, heat, water hazards and the inevitable bumps and bruises from outdoor play.

**Shield your skin
from harmful rays**

The summer sun can be harsh, making it important to take steps to prevent sunburn, even if it's partly cloudy or overcast. If you plan to be outside for more than 15 minutes, apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 before heading outdoors. Remember to reapply to all exposed skin—including overlooked spots like your ears, neck and tops of feet—every two hours, or more often if you're swimming or sweating.

Wearing protective clothing, such as wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses and light, long-sleeved shirts, can also help shield you from harmful UV rays. When possible, seek shade during peak sun hours, typically 10 a.m.–4 p.m., to minimize direct exposure.

Be prepared for summer scrapes

Accidents can happen anytime, especially during active summer days. Having a well-stocked first-aid kit, including bandages, antiseptic wipes and

ointments, can help you quickly address minor cuts, scrapes and blisters.



Keep the fluids flowing in the heat

During the summer months, the heat can quickly lead to dehydration, which can cause dizziness, headaches and even heat stroke. Drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if you don't feel

thirsty, to stay hydrated. Aim for at least 8-10 glasses of water (8 ounces each) each day, or more if you're going to be spending an extended amount of time outdoors or engaging in physical activities like hiking, biking or playing sports.

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Summer Fun

Continued from Page 2

Keeping a refillable water bottle with you can make it easier to stay hydrated on the go and replenish the water your body loses through sweat. In addition to water, consuming hydrating foods like watermelon, strawberries, cantaloupe, cucumbers and bell peppers can help maintain your fluid levels and regulate your body's temperature. Also avoid excessive consumption of caffeinated or alcoholic beverages, which can contribute to dehydration.

Keep pesky insects at bay

Summer evenings are perfect for outdoor activities, but they can also attract mosquitoes, ticks and other pests. Protect yourself and your family by applying insect repellent on top of your sunscreen to all exposed skin and loose-fitting clothing. Reapply as needed, according to the instructions on the package.

Repellant fans, candles, torches and bracelets may be good alternatives to spray or roll-on insect repellants. Wearing long sleeves and pants, especially in wooded or grassy areas, can also help prevent bug bites. Remember to check for ticks after spending time outdoors and, if found, promptly remove them by using clean tweezers and pulling straight upward. Avoid twisting, squeezing or burning ticks, which can lead to the release of saliva or cause the head to break off.

Have fun in the water, safely

Summer is the perfect time to hit the pool, beach or lake, but remember to prioritize safety while enjoying the water. Always swim in designated areas and never swim alone. If supervising children, ensure they are within an arm's reach and

wearing properly fitting flotation devices.

Avoid alcohol when swimming or supervising swimmers, as it can impair your judgment and reaction times, and be aware of your surroundings, including weather conditions and water currents. Enrolling kids in swimming lessons can also contribute to a safer experience in the water.

Building your summer scrape kit

A summer first-aid scrape kit can be a lifesaver for those inevitable bumps, bruises and blisters. Keep your family's kit in a waterproof case and in an easily accessible place, such as your car, pool bag or home first-aid cabinet. Make sure to keep it stocked with essentials for cuts, scrapes, burns, blisters and beyond, such as:

- Antiseptic wipes for cleaning wounds
- Antibiotic or antimicrobial ointment to help prevent buildup of bacteria
- Bandages with Aloe Vera to treat minor cuts, scrapes and blisters
- Non-latex gloves to protect hands from dirt and germs
- Hydrocortisone cream for bug bites and rashes
- Sunscreen to help prevent sunburn
- Aloe vera gel for sunburn relief
- Water bottles to stay hydrated
- Ear drops for preventing or treating swimmer's ear
- Insect repellent to help prevent bug bites
- Tweezers for removing splinters and pests
- Pain-relieving medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen
- Ice packs to help slow inflammation and reduce pain
- Thermometer to check temperature
- Other medications for allergies, nausea, congestion and more



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Make the most of summer: *5 tips for boating confidently and safely*

(BPT) — Looking for ways to make the most of your time outdoors this summer? Grab your crew and go boating! Being on the water is one of the best ways to disconnect from distractions on land, allowing you to relax and recharge in nature. Not only is there a scientific connection between boating and happiness — the sight and sound of water promotes wellness by increasing serotonin, lowering cortisol and reducing stress — but boating is also a fun way to spend time with loved ones and meet new people within the boating community. There are plenty of ways to get on the water whether you rent, charter, share, join a boat club or own a boat.

Remember, boating should be enjoyable, not intimidating. Before stepping on board or taking the helm, brush up on your nautical know-how to boost your confidence and create a safer environment, allowing for a pleasant, stress-free day on the water for everyone involved.

“There’s nothing like spending a day on the water — where freedom meets fresh air, stress melts away and lasting memories are made with your favorite people,” said Ellen Bradley, senior vice president of

Discover Boating. “Whether you’re new to boating, a seasoned captain or a passenger along for the ride, it’s always smart to brush up on the rules of the water. Discover Boating makes it easy with expert tips and safety resources right at your fingertips.”

Discover Boating is a one-stop destination for all things boating, from safety and education articles, maintenance checklists and boating destinations, to finding your dream boat, locating verified dealerships in your area and more.

Below are five tips from Discover Boating to improve your boating knowledge to ensure the best possible experience on your next boating adventure.

Learn boating safety essentials. View Discover Boating’s new video series in collaboration with Progressive Insurance® for expert tips ranging from preparing your boat for the season to trailering, boating with kids and furry friends and more. If you plan on buying a boat or you are a new boat owner, consider getting boat insurance for an added layer of security and protection.

See **BOATING**, Page 5





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▶ Boating

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Take a boating course. Sign up for a boating lesson to hone your powerboating, sailing or watersports skills by mastering the basics while having fun along the way. On-water training courses, watersports camps, youth boating programs and more are offered across the country.

Visit a boat show. Boat shows are an ideal place to immerse yourself in the boating lifestyle and provide a unique opportunity to meet face-to-face with — and shop — a variety of boat dealers and marine product companies all under one roof. Most boat shows also offer hands-on demonstrations and educational opportunities for boaters of all experience levels. Find a boat show in your area.

Look for the seal of approval. When shopping for a boat, whether at a boat show, online or at a dealership, check to make sure it is NMMA Certified. NMMA Certified boat and trailer manufacturers have been independently inspected to ensure they meet strict industry standards for safety and construction, as well as all federal regulations. Look for the NMMA Certified sticker near the helm of a boat.

Maintenance matters. Similar to cars, there are a few areas that require regular maintenance by the owner, and a few areas that require maintenance at routine intervals, which most leave to



the professionals. Prepare a boat maintenance checklist that covers everything from engine needs to cleaning to electrical systems to ensure your boat has a long lifespan.

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What to look for in a vacation rental

A traveler's guide to picking the perfect vacation property

Hardworking individuals and their families look forward to their vacations with much anticipation. People not only work hard to afford a relaxing getaway, but also to plan such excursions.

There's no shortage of lodging options to consider when planning a vacation, and travelers tend to have strong opinions about which types of places to rest their heads. A 2023 survey from Boston.com asked readers about their lodging preferences, and 73 percent indicated hotels are their first choice. Short-term rentals (11 percent) were less attractive to readers, but 16 percent of respondents indicated certain variables, including the length of the trip, affected which option they felt was best.

Vacationers considering a short-term rental service like Vrbo or Airbnb can keep these tips in mind as they seek a rental property for their next getaway.

Identify your priorities. It sounds simple, but recognition of your needs is important before you begin searching for a property. Many rental properties are awe-inspiring, and it's easy to get swept up by a property's stunning views or additional amenities. But ocean views or penthouses perched high atop a metropolitan locale won't necessarily accommodate all vacationers. For example, parents might want to prioritize bedrooms for the kids and a private outdoor space to relax together once the children fall

asleep, while singletons might find that penthouse view is more important.

Give ample thought to location. Locale and location are not necessarily the same. Many vacationers know a locale they would like to visit prior to planning their trips, but the location of the property they ultimately choose is an important variable as well. Some vacationers may rank proximity to nightlife high on their list, while others might want a secluded property that's ideal for relaxation. The location of a property can go a long way toward determining how enjoyable a trip can be, so be sure to check the address of each rental to determine precisely where it is in relation to restaurants, nightlife, beaches and other amenities.

Consider the amenities. No two rental properties are the same, so vacationers would be wise to read the details of each listing prior to booking a reservation. Some rental properties provide bed linens and towels, while others ask guests to bring their own. Some properties may come with access to an on-site pool or lounge, while others may only allow guests to enter the property itself. Amenities can sometimes make or break a property, so give these ample thought.

There's no shortage of lodging options for modern vacationers. When considering renting a privately owned property, vacationers can embrace some simple strategies to ensure the property they ultimately choose is the best fit.



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8 games to try at the next backyard bash

Games can enhance any outdoor function. Whether at the beach or in one's backyard, activities can keep guests entertained in between the food and other refreshments. And the good news is that most games designed for these types of functions are appropriate for players across a wide range of ages.

The following are eight games that can add to the excitement of any outdoor gathering.

1. Ladder toss: Also known as ladder golf, this game requires players to toss string-attached balls onto a ladder-shaped target. Points are awarded depending on which rung the ball lands on.

2. Kubb: Pronounced "KOOB," this Swedish lawn game believed to have originated during the era of the Vikings and is best described as a blend of bowling and horseshoes. Two teams compete to knock over their opponents' wooden blocks by throwing batons.

3. Cornhole: Many people have played cornhole, which involves tossing bean bags at the cornhole board. The objective is to get the bag into the hole or on the board to score points. The game can be played as singles or doubles. The first team to reach 21 points wins.



4. Spikeball™: Also called Roundnet, this two-on-two sport is played by hitting a ball off a net with the goal of preventing the opposing team from returning the ball within three touches.

5. Ring toss: This is another game that tests hand-eye coordination. Players take turns tossing the rings onto the target pegs. Each peg is worth a different number of points. The first player to reach the agreed-upon amount of points wins.

6. Connect four in a row: Giant versions of familiar tabletop games also are available for yard use. With this game, players need to get four chips in a row, either up and down or diagonal.

7. Kan Jam®: Similar to cornhole or horseshoes, Kan Jam® features two teams of two that alternate between throwing a frisbee and trying to deflect it. The goal is to get the frisbee into the can.

8. Rollers: Goals are placed 25 feet apart and then players roll wooden discs to try to get closest to the goal. Each side of the disc has a different number to determine the point value.

Backyard events can be enhanced with some game play. There are plenty of fun options for your next gathering.

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Activities for seniors with limited mobility

Physical activity is a valuable tool in the fight against chronic disease and other conditions. In fact, the Cleveland Clinic highlights physical activity among its nine ways to prevent disease in an effort to live a long and rewarding life.

Children, adolescents, young adults and even men and women in middle age may not face too many physical hurdles when they try to exercise, but seniors are not always so lucky. Aging men and women with mobility issues may wonder if they can reap the rewards of physical activity, and thankfully there are many ways to exercise even if getting up and going isn't as easy as it might have been in years past. Sometimes referred to as "aerobic exercise" or simply "cardio," cardiovascular exercise is an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of physical activities that raise the heart rate and improve endurance. Seniors with mobility issues can look to various forms of cardio for inspiration as they seek to be more physically active without compromising their overall health.

Walk your way to a healthier you. Walking is a form of cardiovascular exercise that is ideal for older adults with mobility issues because it need not be physically demanding and it's safe to walk just about anywhere. Walking in a place such as a local park can be particularly good for older adults because they can take periodic breaks on benches if



aches, pains or stiffness is affecting their ability to keep moving.

Take up swimming. Swimming might be tailor-made for seniors with mobility issues because it's a great workout and exercising in water tends to be less taxing on muscles and joints. The Cleveland Clinic notes that swimming promotes heart health, strengthens the lungs, helps to burn calories and builds muscle, among other benefits. And many seniors find swimming is just as fun in their golden years as it was in their youth, which means aging adults might not face problems with motivation when the time comes to get in the pool.

Use an exercise bike or portable pedal exerciser. Cycling is a wonderful exercise but one that seniors with mobility issues may feel is no longer possible. If doctors advise against riding a traditional bike, an exercise bike or portable pedal exerciser can provide many of the benefits of cycling without

as great a risk for accident or injury. A portable pedal exerciser can be carried to a park, where seniors can still spend time in the great outdoors, which is one of the most appealing reasons to get on a bike and go.

Take beginner yoga or tai chi. Help-Guide.org notes that gentle yoga or tai chi can help to improve flexibility and reduce stress and anxiety. Though yoga and tai chi can provide as much demanding physical activity as individuals allow, beginner classes in each discipline don't require much movement but do provide enough for seniors hoping to be less sedentary.

Even seniors with mobility issues can find safe and effective ways to be more physically active. Prior to beginning a new exercise regimen, seniors with mobility issues are urged to discuss activities with their physicians.

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Everything you need for the perfect picnic

Dining outdoors is a popular way to enjoy a meal. Many restaurants set up tables outside of their establishments or in nearby courtyards when the weather warms. There is an indescribable quality to sipping a drink or taking a bite to eat while the sun is shining and the breeze is blowing.

Al fresco dining need not be a complicated affair. In fact, picnics are an informal outdoor meal and can be quite enjoyable. There's nothing pretentious about a picnic, and setting one up requires just a few essentials to make the picnic go smoothly. Here's a look at what to bring along for the ultimate picnic experience.

Blanket: For picnic purists, enjoying a picnic requires being close to the ground. That necessitates some sort of protection from damp grass or sandy conditions. If possible, choose a waterproof picnic blanket that moisture cannot permeate. A blanket that folds up easily and has its own carrying case can be especially convenient.

Insulated tote: Although an old-fashioned wicker picnic basket may be on brand for a picnic, opting for an insulated tote bag or cooler-like container will help keep the food and beverages at the preferred temperature. Make sure to have plenty of ice packs on hand to keep the picnic tote contents chilled.

Reusable plates and utensils: Those who plan to make picnicking more than just a once-in-a-blue-moon event would be wise to invest in some picnic products. Durable and reusable picnic utensils, plates and drinking cups help make dining outside more comfortable.

Trash bags: Always carry out what you've carried in, whether you're going to a park, beach or a hiking trail. That means having something to carry trash out so it can be properly disposed of.

Corkscrew: If wine or beer will be part of the picnic offerings, make sure to have a corkscrew and bottle opener at the ready.

Sanitizing wipes: Proper hygiene is essential for handling picnic fare, which tends to be sandwiches or finger foods. Therefore, bring along hand sanitizer or



sanitizing wipes to clean hands before the meal, especially if restrooms aren't nearby.

Cloth napkins: Cloth napkins have more weight to them than paper napkins, which means they're less likely to blow away in the breeze. Invest in a set of inexpensive cloth napkins for dining outside. Simply drop them in the washing machine to clean up after the picnic is done.

Storage containers: Whether it's in bento-style boxes or individual snap/lock lid plastic containers, food should be packaged securely so there are no spills on the way to the picnic area.

Sun protection: Be sure to bring along sunscreen, wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses to protect oneself from the sun while enjoying the picnic. A portable umbrella can be staked into the ground to provide some shade.

Picnics are relaxing ways to enjoy an informal meal in the great outdoors. Certain gear can make a picnic even more enjoyable.

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Features to accommodate outdoor cooking

Various things come to mind when pondering outdoor entertaining. Outdoor living spaces run the gamut from expansive oases with a pool, hot tub and room to lounge to smaller areas with some seating that allows hosts and guests to enjoy some fresh air. One common theme in most outdoor living spaces, regardless of their size, is an area to cook, typically over an open flame.

Grilling is wildly popular. According to the grilling experts at Traeger, roughly 128 million households across the United States owned a grill in 2020. Grills are similarly popular in Canada, where a 2023 poll from Ipsos-Reid found that 78 percent of Canadians own a grill. Outdoor cooking is a staple of life in the U.S. and Canada, and this popular means to meal preparation can be made even more enjoyable with a few simple upgrades to an outdoor living space.

Natural gas grill: Natural gas grills are designed to be connected with a home's natural gas line. That can make it more convenient to grill, particularly for people who grill often and do not want to deal with charcoal and propane tanks that require routine trips to a grocery store or other retailer to resupply. With a natural gas grill, cooks can fire up the grill at any time just like they would when using a gas stove indoors.

Refrigerator: Incorporating a refrigerator into an outdoor living space can make outdoor cooking more convenient. Depending on the size of the appliance, an outdoor refrigerator can store condiments and sauces, saving cooks the trouble of walking back and forth between indoor and outdoor living spaces to gather supplies for cooking. A slightly larger outdoor refrigerator also can be used to store the food that will be cooked on the grill, affording cooks more time to spend outdoors.

Outdoor pantry: An outdoor living



space that incorporates a pantry to store dishes and tools of the barbecuing trade, like spatulas and tongs, can make grill sessions easier for cooks. When planning a new outdoor living space, a pantry can be incorporated into the design. If augmenting an existing space, standalone

pantries can provide similar functionality as built-in alternatives.

Outdoor sink: All those utensils and cooking instruments will ultimately need to be washed. An outdoor sink ensures utensils and tools can be washed and dried outside, saving hosts the trouble of carrying items in at the end of the night only to return them to the outdoor pantry the following morning. An outdoor sink also makes it easier to rinse vegetables before cooking them over an open flame.

Garden bar: Grilling can be a rewarding but lonely undertaking. Grills often

are set away from outdoor dining tables so guests can comfortably converse and eat without being drowned out by the sizzle of the grill or overwhelmed by smoke that can come pouring out when opening the grill lid. A garden bar that's adjacent to the grill can provide a gathering space for guests and ensure cooks aren't spending the duration of a get-together going it alone.

Outdoor cooking is wildly popular, and might prove even more so when incorporating various convenient features into an exterior living space.



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Must-have features when outfitting an outdoor living space

Outdoor living spaces are wildly popular. A 2024 poll of more than 1,000 homeowners conducted by Thumbtack found that 29 percent of respondents intended to spend as much as \$5,000 improving their outdoor spaces in the coming months.

There's much to gain from upgrading outdoor living spaces. In addition to the improved functionality and additional usage residents get to enjoy when upgrading these spaces, such projects can help to improve resale value. In fact, a 2021 survey of real estate agents conducted by HomeLight found that a new patio provided an average return on investment of 109 percent.

There's much to gain in both the short- and long-term when upgrading an outdoor living space. The following are a handful of must-have features to make such spaces an even better addition to a home's existing layout and landscape.

Multi-functionality: The home renovation experts at This Old House note versatility in an outdoor living space can set a stage for relaxation, entertaining and family activities. Outdoor living spaces tend to be most useful when they're multifunctional, providing a space where residents can relax on weekend mornings and evenings throughout the week while also offering the potential to entertain crowds during backyard barbecue season. Homeowners can keep this in mind and prioritize multifunctionality when designing outdoor living spaces.

Seamless connectivity with interior designs: Though outdoor living areas were long viewed as areas wholly separate from home interiors, that traditional outlook has changed in recent years. In a 2024 survey conducted by Fixr, 78 percent of industry experts noted a coherent indoor-outdoor design was the most popular outdoor living space trend that year. This design choice suggests an outdoor living space is an extension of the home as opposed to a wholly separate area.



Comfortable seating: The days of stackable plastic lawn chairs are largely a thing of the past. Modern outdoor living spaces offer comfortable, all-weather seating where residents and guests can gather to relax and engage in conversation. Accent tables to place drinks and other items is another nice touch that can add to the comfort-first feel of an outdoor space. Modular furniture merits homeowners' consideration, as such furnishings can be customized and rearranged for each gathering and might prove easier to store for homeowners who will be taking the seating in over the winter.

Lighting: Of course, summer gatherings in outdoor living spaces have a tendency to continue past sundown. Proper lighting can ensure spaces are safely navigated when the sun goes down. Sufficient lighting also enhances the visual appeal of the space while facilitating conversation when natural light is no

longer enough to illuminate a space.

There's no shortage of ways to create an awe-inspiring outdoor living space.

Homeowners can start with some must-have features and then build on the spaces as they see fit.



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