

## Simple Farmhouse Joys

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## ↑ Up, Up and Away →

As you evaluate which home improvements to make this year, keep in mind exterior upgrades. A garage door replacement, for example, can add up to a very wise expenditure. *Remodeling* magazine, a leading trade publication, recently published its "2010-2011 Cost vs. Value Report."\* This report indicated the national average for returns on a mid-range garage door replacement was 83.9%—the second highest ranking on the list. If your garage door is damaged or simply outdated in appearance, replacing it will increase your enjoyment of your home, as well as maintain your investment. Should you wish to sell your home, an attractive garage door can affect a potential buyer's first impression and with it your home's resale value.

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### Forest Glen is At Your Service

Now is the perfect time to look around your home and imagine new uses for the space you have. Let us help you get organized. Maybe you need to add a little space to make your home function perfectly for you. Or maybe you're tired of your outdated kitchen and need it re-designed. We can help with an in-home consultation to show you how we can design and build a space that fits your lifestyle.

Kitchens, as the heart of the home, have come a long way since homes were built in the 1960s and 1970s. What was available back then is nothing compared to today's innovations. With an on-staff architect and our design staff to guide you, we can help you find space you didn't realize you had by reconfiguring the kitchen footprint and giving you the extra counters and storage you've always wanted.

Part of the charm of a country kitchen is that so much of the décor is usable and functional in the kitchen. Wicker baskets are a perfect place to stash away things like napkin rings or cookie cutters or your secret chocolate stash! Use an old crock to store utensils or as a vase for flowers.

Our designers can show you many options and design solutions and they will assist you in choosing your new cabinetry, appliances, countertops, and accessories. Our staff is with you from start to finish. Call **Forest Glen Construction** at **847-236-0895** and we will gladly meet with you to discuss all the options to make your home all that you want it to be.



Photo: Courtesy of ALNO (www.ALNOusa.com)

## Simple Farmhouse Joys

**A**lthough we enjoy being non-stop connected to the world with our cell phones and the internet, sometimes we would like to escape all that. We long for quiet moments just to sit at the breakfast table, look out the window and watch the new day begin. The slower pace of rural life in years gone by seems very appealing.

*"I have a farm and I love it there. There's really nothing to do, but even watching the chickens, it's fun."*

**-Salma Hayek**

As if in answer to these desires, a trend has evolved for designing modern interior spaces that reflect the rustic simplicity of the American farmhouse. These homes

are not fussy and frilly, as is often associated with country-style decorating. Rather, their interiors celebrate natural materials and the honest craftsmanship of early farm families who built their homes with practicality in mind. Each element in the kitchen, for example—from the long wooden plank table to the crockery—had a purpose, and the farm families created much of it by hand. In your updated farmhouse kitchen you can savor the rugged beauty of wood, aged metal, leather, cotton, stone and twigs blended with the convenience of today's latest fixtures and appliances.

Wide plank hardwood floors are one of the hallmarks of an American farmhouse. One way to give your floors a look that is genuine is to install hand-scraped hardwood flooring with a finish created by hand using wood scraping

tools. Distressed hardwoods provide a realistic look that is less pricey because the markings in the wood are done by machine. A very authentic choice would be reclaimed lumber that proudly displays the nicks and gouges gained from years of wear in a barn or factory. Other flooring options could include brick, earthen tile, concrete or stone.

Keep the look uncomplicated for the walls and ceilings as well—a simple plastered surface finished with flat paint is perfect. If you wish, panel the walls with beadboard or create a more rustic appearance with stone or brick veneer. Exposed planks and timbers add interest to ceilings, as does beadboard paneling.

The American farmer handcrafted his own unpretentious cabinets and furniture based on classical styles with which he was familiar, creating a simplified version of the original. Today, the clean lines of Shaker-inspired cabinets and furnishings evoke a similar feeling. Look for unadorned raised-panel cabinet doors, antiqued metal knobs and pulls, and simple turned legs. Include a tall glass-front buffet and hutch in the kitchen or breakfast room to display crockery.

Window treatments should be minimal, with shutters, natural woven shades or solid-color fabric curtains as appropriate choices. When practical, leave the windows uncovered to keep things as open and airy as possible. Simple metal chandeliers and lanterns are well-suited to the farmhouse look. Add warmth and personality with a few primitive paintings and old family photographs, but always remember...keep it simple!



Photo: Courtesy of Graff (www.graff-faucets.com)

*Bali faucet in Bronze finish with the look of an old-fashioned hand water pump.*



Photo: Courtesy of Native Trails (www.nativetrails.com)

*Hand-hammered copper farmhouse sink in the Antique finish.*

## Ideas for Creating the "Rustic" Look

Whether your idea of the perfect home is a charming white-washed cottage or a rugged log cabin, the updated rustic look is one of this year's big style trends. Welcome to our scrapbook of ideas for creating this look in your home.

# WHAT IS GREEN BUILDING? Q&A

When you hear the term “green building” what is the first thing that comes to mind? Do you think of a home with solar panels harnessing energy from the sun? Solar panels can help lower your monthly electric bill, as well as protect our



natural resources, but they are just a small component in the much bigger picture of what is green building.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines green building as “the practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building’s life-cycle from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation and deconstruction.” (www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/index.htm)

Using this definition, you can see that green building is far more complex than you may have thought. As an example, some of the answers to the following questions may surprise you:

### Q. Must I build a new house if I want my home to be green?

**A.** That depends—it may be a greener choice for you to stay in your existing home. Even though it may take a certain amount of energy and new materials to remodel to green standards, many components of an older home may be reused. Also, older homes in established neighborhoods often have easier access to services like schools and doctors’ offices, thereby lessening the environmental impact of transportation. With a new home, you must also consider the impact to undeveloped land, in addition to all the energy and new materials required to build.

### Q. I think my home is green: it is tightly sealed and well insulated—but the indoor air smells bad. Now what?

**A.** Both energy efficiency and indoor air quality are important tenets of green building. If you utilize tight construction methods, yet you do

not have proper home ventilation—your indoor air can cause health difficulties such as headaches and respiratory problems. Healthy green homes must include an active ventilation system to provide fresh air while exhausting the stale air. It is also important to choose cabinets, flooring, paints, etc. that do not off-gas toxic VOCs.

### Q. I want to save on my water bill, so I installed high-efficiency toilets and low-flow faucets. What else I can do?

**A.** Don’t forget about the exterior of your home. Choose a landscape design that minimizes turf, since lawns require more irrigation than any other vegetation. Planting trees and shrubs instead of grass also helps reduce runoff and soil erosion. When you do plant grass, choose a variety that grows well in this area and is drought resistant and pest resistant. Reducing the amount of fertilizer and pesticides is also good for the environment.

### Q. Is it always the better green choice to use bamboo flooring instead of hardwood?

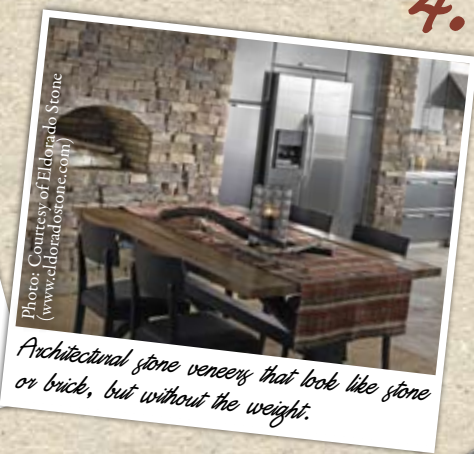
**A.** It is important to consider every aspect of a product—from design to distribution to installation. Bamboo flooring is made from many small pieces or strands of bamboo that are fused together. Before you install bamboo flooring, be sure its adhesive contains no VOCs that could harm your indoor air. Also, consider the amount of energy used to transport the bamboo flooring to this country. Local hardwoods from managed forests may actually be the greener choice.

We’re always happy to answer your questions regarding green building or visit [www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/index.htm) for more information.



3.

*Natural woven baskets for storing food items that require air circulation.*



4.

*Architectural stone veneers that look like stone or brick, but without the weight.*



Photo: Courtesy of Troy Lighting (www.troy-lighting.com)

*Hand-wrought wrought iron chandelier in the Old Rust finish.*

5.



Photo: Courtesy of Ashley Norton (www.ashleynorton.com)

*Solid bronze hardware with the Dark Bronze Patina.*

6.

Up, Up and Away

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What Is Green Building?



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Photo: Courtesy Clopay  
([www.clopaydoor.com](http://www.clopaydoor.com))



Photo: Courtesy Overhead Door  
([www.overheaddoor.com](http://www.overheaddoor.com))

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Curb appeal, after all, is what gets a buyer through the door to see what else your home has to offer.

When choosing a new garage door, there are many options to consider. First of all, it is important that the design of your garage door complement the architectural style and details of your home. The currently popular carriage-house style garage doors evoke memories of old-fashioned carriage-house doors that would swing outward at the center. Today's roll-up garage door with a carriage-house look lends a vintage air to a traditionally styled home. The classic raised-panel garage door can also blend nicely with a traditional home. A contemporary or retro-style home may be enhanced by a sleek, modern-looking garage door—such as an aluminum and glass design.

There are also many choices of materials for your garage door—from wood, to steel, to synthetics—with some doors constructed of several layers of different materials sandwiched

together for optimum beauty and function. Nothing matches the warmth and character of natural wood, but upkeep is an important consideration. A wood door will need to be painted or stained every few years and tends to be heavy—requiring more from the garage door opener. A steel door, or one made of synthetic materials such as fiberglass or vinyl, is lighter weight, more durable and virtually maintenance-free. It can be designed to look like wood using wood-grain composite overlays or embossed patterns.

Energy efficiency is another point to consider. Insulated or non-insulated garage doors are available. If your garage is attached to your home, it will help reduce utility bills if the garage door is insulated. If, however, the purpose of your detached garage is limited to housing your car, the less expensive, non-insulated door will suffice.

*\*([www.remodeling.hw.net/2010/costvalue/national.aspx](http://www.remodeling.hw.net/2010/costvalue/national.aspx))*



Photo: Courtesy Clopay ([www.clopaydoor.com](http://www.clopaydoor.com))

