

# BECOME A HANDYMAN SUPERMAN

## Site gives advice on all sorts of DIY projects

**W**hen Superman wants to escape from all of the pressure that comes with saving the world every day, he retreats to the Fortress of Solitude. When a dad wants to escape from all of the pressure that comes with raising a family, he doesn't have the luxury of an isolated Arctic ice fortress. He has to settle for the upstairs bathroom.

My personal Fortress of Solitude was in desperate need of remodeling. It resembled an old gas station bathroom more than a pristine palace of ice. So, I decided to take this year's income tax refund and build a space that would make Kal-El proud.



**KEVIN O'NEILL**  
*InSites*

I'm reasonably handy when it comes to do-it-yourself projects, but I don't have the skills or knowledge of a professional contractor. So when I take on a project that's at the edge of my abilities,

I'm always looking for resources to help me do it right. I found a great one at [FamilyHandyman.com](http://FamilyHandyman.com).

There are lots of DIY websites and videos online that show you how to do almost any project you can imagine. However, the quality of the instruction ranges from very good to practically useless, so you have to sift through many tutorials in order to find the good ones. The Family Handyman eliminates the searching by having a wide range of quality instruction.

The site is the digital arm of The Family Handyman magazine, which claims to be the oldest and largest publication for do-it-yourselfers. Both are published by Reader's Digest.

### Project descriptions

The home page is anchored by a slide show of featured projects. Each project is promoted with a headline, a brief description and a photo. Clicking on the photo or headline brings you to a page with thorough instructions, lists of tools needed, photos, videos and diagrams on how to do the project. The projects currently featured cover yard drainage, a spring home maintenance check list, building a garden bench, outdoor lighting tips and adding a roof under a second-story deck.

Beneath the featured projects is a section called Popular Tip Collections. There's tips on inspecting your house for trouble spots, mobile DIY apps and ridding your yard of weeds. The tips are set up the same as the projects, with a brief description and photo linking to complete instructions.

Scrolling down the page brings you to more features. There's Popular How-To Videos, What's Trending, blog posts and more featured projects. The bottom of the page has links to other sections and social media connections.

At the top of the page is a navigation bar with drop-down menus to the interior sections. The Rooms menu covers attics, basements, bathrooms and all of the other spaces you'll find in a typical house. The Skills menu includes everything from appliance repair and automotive to tools and woodworking. The Parts of the House menu covers floors to ceilings and walls to windows. Finally, the Outdoors menu takes you, as you may have guessed, out to the deck, garden, patio and more. Selecting any of the sections on the drop-down menus takes you to several pages of projects related to the topic.

### Find your project

There's also a search field at the top of the page. This allows you to search for how-to advice on specific projects that you're attempting. I used this feature several times during my bathroom project to walk me through things I hadn't done before, or just to refresh my memory on things I hadn't done in a while.

The design of The Family Handyman is functional, but not especially interesting visually. Everything is well organized and easy to follow. The typography is unified with a good hierarchy. The photographs, videos and diagrams are all clear and easy to understand, and the copy is informative and well-written.

I found this site to be very helpful. It saved me a lot of time, money and future problems by giving good, easy-to-follow directions. I'm sure I have more DIY projects in my future, so I'll be visiting this site again. But first, I have to visit my Fortress of Solitude.

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