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How to update mobile home countertops

CCO/Pexels/Pixabay Buying a home is one of the largest investments an individual makes in their lifetime. Before jumping into the world of home ownership, it's important to consider all available options. For buyers looking for a flexible and cost effective alternative to a traditional stick built home, a mobile home may be the solution. Mobile home sales are currently on the rise in the U.S. An estimated 20 million Americans live in mobile homes, as of 2018. Additionally, 20% of residences in North Carolina are mobile homes. Many mobile homes come equipped with customizable floor plans, and can accommodate two or three bedrooms, a fitted washer and dryer, two bathrooms and a breakfast bar. There are many advantages to purchasing a mobile home, as well as a few disadvantages that should be considered before making a decision on a property. Here's some information on mobile home ownership, including common floor plans, property values, and a guide to selling or moving a mobile home. Two Bedroom Homes A two bedroom mobile home can be set out on a 600 square foot to 1,900 square foot floor plan so a family could buy an affordable property that also has plenty of space. One of the best things about mobile homes is that you can adapt the space to suit your needs if purchasing new. Although you can adapt the space of a conventional property, it's far more expensive. A mobile home is more adaptable because of the materials it's made from so you'll get a choice of floor plans and the chance to customize the place before you take ownership. Floor Plans If you see a picture taken from inside a modern mobile home, you might think you're looking at a conventional house because the floor will be carpeted, the walls covered with paintings and photographs, and the rooms filled with comfortable chairs and furnishing you'd expect to find in most homes. When mobile homes were truly mobile, they were eight or ten feet wide with little corridor space. One room led into the other and life was compromised for the occupants. When mobile homes became too big to be moved around, they became more luxurious with big floor plans and all the amenities found in conventional properties. Double Wide Homes Two, three, four and five bedroom mobile homes are available if you opt for a double wide mobile home. Walk-in closets and private bathrooms are offered in these places that also have utility rooms and large kitchens with dining areas big enough for family meals. Thanks to a width of 30 feet and a length of at least 70 feet, these places offer loads of space but not as much as you'd find in the typical American home. According to Census Bureau information from 2015, the average US home occupies 2,687 square feet while the typical mobile home only covers 1,080 square feet. Mobile Home Valuations Does the value of a mobile home go up or down? Property prices go up and down but is that the same with mobile homes? Unfortunately for mobile home owners, in most parts of America supply outstrips demand meaning the value of their property falls as it ages. The price of new mobile homes isn't standardized so making a valuation of a property whether you're selling or buying is difficult. Factors like the lot the home is on, the park and the community make a difference to the value and that's before you've even considered the home itself, its condition and size. Selling a Mobile Home When it's time to sell you have two options. The first is to sell it yourself. This means listing it yourself after establishing its market value. The other option is to sell to a broker for a wholesale price. There are advantages to both methods. If you sell the property on your own, you'll need to get park approval. If you have poor credit or a criminal background, most parks will block your sale. If the home needs repairs or the park is selling properties themselves, you might also get turned down. You'll get a significantly lower price if you sell to a broker but selling wholesale will put the cash into your pocket quickly. Moving Your Mobile Home Mobile homes aren't as mobile as they used to be but you can still move them from site to site. You won't be hitching the home to the back of your truck and motoring down the highway yourself but you can hire firms to do that for you. Companies in this line of work have labor and set-up costs to cover, and need materials, permits and various transportation fees paid as part of their fee to move the property for you. The distance from site to site, the size and weight of the property also come into consideration. MORE FROM LIFE123.COM Photo Courtesy: Stefan Widua/Unsplash When you're in the market for a mobile home, one decision you have to make is whether to buy a new or used model. Buyers of used mobile homes usually choose the pre-owned option to save money or time. However, shopping for a secondhand mobile home requires some due diligence. You have to know what to look for in a unit and how to calculate whether it's worth the investment. Understand the Local Ordinances Regulating Mobile Homes Before you start looking at used mobile homes in your area, find out what rules and regulations are in place. Your state and local governments may detail what you can and cannot do with a mobile home, such as where you can place it. Local zoning laws may prohibit moving a single wide mobile home inside the city limits. Mobile homes also have to meet safety requirements, such as the ability to withstand certain wind speeds in coastal regions prone to hurricane damage. Photo Courtesy: Michal Balog/Unsplash Know the Neighborhood Restrictions If you're thinking of buying a home that's already in a park or planning to move one in, make sure you also meet the park's requirements. Senior living mobile home parks only allow people older than 55. Families need to find parks that cater to couples and children. The park may have restrictions about the type of mobile home you can move in. For example, a park may set an age limit on mobile homes in the community or allow only a certain number of single wides in the park to boost the neighborhood's curb appeal. Photo Courtesy: Tom Rumble/Unsplash Inspect the Mobile Home's Exterior and Floors It's never a good idea to buy real estate sight unseen, especially when that real estate is a used mobile home. If the home has been lived in, it most likely needs repairs. The question is how much work you have to do to make it livable. Pay close attention to the condition of the roof. Look for tears in the underbelly. If you're looking at used double wide mobile homes, ensure the floor is level. Repairing the home can be costly and require trips to stores that sell parts like replacement mobile home doors and windows. Photo Courtesy: Larry Crain/Stock Examine the Wiring and Plumbing If everything else checks out, take a closer look at the electric and plumbing systems. Make sure the wiring is up to code, especially if you're considering a mobile home built before 1976. Look for signs of plumbing problems, such as leaking pipes. Service and waste lines run between the subfloor and the belly. If water gets in this space, you end up with water damage. Note soft spots you feel on the floor or places where you see it bowing or sagging. If you see wet insulation or smell mold or mildew, you'll probably have to replace the floor. Photo Courtesy: Sigmund/Unsplash Consider the Total Cost of the Mobile Home Paying for a mobile home can be a challenge because of limited financing options. Some lenders don't offer loans for these properties, and some finance only the land they sit on. You may have to pay for the home in cash and still find a way to handle the necessary repairs. This is one reason why many owners decide to tackle these repairs on their own. Photo Courtesy: Mia Ye/Unsplash Calculate Moving Costs Unless you're buying a mobile home that comes with a piece of land, you also have to calculate the cost of moving it. In addition to paying for the actual cost of the truck and crew, you have to cover the cost of clearing the lot and setting up the mobile home. This includes connecting the utilities and leveling the home. Other items you may need to add to your budget is the price to install skirting and fees for permits. Photo Courtesy: Lawton Cook/Unsplash These figures combined with the repair estimates give you a better picture of what the mobile home costs. Whether you're planning to live in the mobile home or rent it out, you want to buy the one that best meets your needs and fits your budget. MORE FROM QUESTIONSANSWERED.NET Countertops can truly make or break a kitchen—even the most beautiful room can be dragged down by dreary linoleum. On the flip side, a Carrara marble countertop will immediately add character, and a note of luxury, to your cooking space. But replacing countertops isn't always an option, because a) it can cost an arm and a leg and b) if you're a renter, you often can't touch them, no matter how unsightly. Luckily for all of us, the internet's DIY whizzes have come up with several solutions to this all-too-common dilemma—none of which involve actually breaking down or rebuilding any counters. So, if you want to bring old, outdated countertops into the present, here are five (far simpler) solutions that will cost you, wait for it...less than \$100. I know what you're thinking: "There's no way that could work." But I assure you, it does! Numerous DIYers have painted their kitchen counters and are absolutely smitten with the results. It's a quick, easy way to update linoleum countertops, and the entire project will cost you well under \$100. All you need is sandpaper, painting supplies, a paint of choice, and a sealer. Don't believe me? Check out this tutorial from Naptime Decorator. She used gray chalk paint to transform her old countertops, and she swears there has only been minimal chipping after a full year of use. The secret is to use a heavy-duty polyurethane finish and be generous with your application. My style is a bit more rustic, so I love a good butcher block countertop. One of the major benefits of these wooden surfaces is that you can strip them down and refinish the wood to give your kitchen a whole new vibe. This will also let you remove any scratches, dings, or marks that may have accumulated over the years. Want to see just how easy it is to refinish butcher block? The bloggers at Chris Loves Julia redid their countertop using sanding paper and Waterlox wood finish, which costs \$35 per quart. All you have to do is sand away the old finish, then paint on a few coats of Waterlox (or a stain of your choice). Just like that, you have a surface that looks brand new. Pouring concrete countertops is no easy feat—but what if you could fake it? DIYers A Beautiful Mess have figured out a way to apply a concrete coating onto existing counters, giving you the look of a real slab at a fraction of the cost. Seriously, a 10-pound bag of feather-finish cement is \$36, and a food-safe concrete sealer is \$30. Even with additional supplies like sandpaper and trowels, your total spend should still be under \$100. Compare this to the cost of new concrete counters—which range from \$65 to \$135 per square foot—and it's really a no-brainer! If you don't feel like buying a string of DIY supplies, you can get everything you need in one countertop refinishing kit. One of the most popular options is the Giani Granite Countertop Paint Kit, which comes in a variety of colors and patterns, and costs just \$80! The kit includes everything you need to complete a three-step paint process on top of old laminate, cultured marble, or ceramic tile countertops: the paint will even cover up scuffs, burns, and scratches. The finished result? Beautiful counters with the look of natural stone. If you want to take it a step further, there are the Rust-Oleum Countertop Transformation Kits. They're a little more expensive, but include color chips that replicate the appearance of natural stone for a truly realistic look. As a renter with an unwilling landlord (sound familiar?), your best option is probably a stick-on solution. It sounds crazy, I know, but people swear that water-resistant vinyl film is the perfect temporary option to cover up ugly counters. This material is incredibly affordable and easy to install thanks to its self-adhesive backing, and there are a ton of beautiful patterns—such as faux marble in a range of colors—that will instantly upgrade your kitchen (or bathroom). If you want to make the surface more permanent, just go over it with polyurethane as a sealant. You're welcome. Got other ideas to bring old countertops to life? Share them in the comments below! This post contains products that are independently selected by our editors, and Food52 may earn an affiliate commission.



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