



On the House

Outdoor home

Patios, decks and high-tech furnishings

By Andy Lang
special writer

AP — What's new on the market?

THE PRODUCT — An all-purpose anti-slip tape. Manufacturer's claim —

That this tape is an expansion of the kind often seen in bathtubs to prevent slipping on the wet surface . . . that one of the types of this tape, the light-duty, is for use in bathtubs, showers and around pools and other barefoot areas . . . that another kind, the heavy-duty, comes in clear or black and is for steps, ramps, construction equipment, machinery and trucks . . . that its durable mineral surface provides protection even when exposed to water, grease or oil . . . that the medium-duty variety comes in gray or black, and is intended for stairs, ladders, boats, decks, docks, recreational vehicles and other possible slippage places . . . that the tape has an adhesive backing allowing it to be applied quickly and easily . . . and that it is available in 1-inch, 2-inch and 4 inch-wide rolls.

THE PRODUCT — A deck-design project planner. Manufacturer's claim —

That this planner permits the development of a multitude of detailed pre-construction plans for an outside deck or patio up to 2,500 square feet in size . . . that it comes in hundreds of reusable peel-and-stick symbols of building materials, lighting fixtures and furniture . . . that the symbols cling firmly to the planner's rigid gridboard layout surface to develop furniture placement ideas and alternative deck designs . . . and that a scale ruler and comprehensive deck-design manual with design tips and advice are included in the kit.

THE PRODUCT — A new satin-finish coating in a spray container. Manufacturer's claim —

That this new formulation delivers a permanent no-gloss satin finish in seconds . . . that it eliminates glossy sheen and light reflection . . . that it is moisture- and smudge-proof . . . that it dries fast to a smooth, professional finish . . . that it has a "no runs, no drips, no errors" formula . . . that it has an "instant dry" time of five to 15

IT'S TIME to move outside. The whole world (more specifically, your yard) is waiting, full of fresh air, sunshine and soft breezes.

But is it ready?

To fully enjoy your home-outside-your-home, you need a lovely patio or deck, the right outdoor furniture and a few extras — such as an efficient barbecue.

Use the following tips to help you create your perfect warm-weather outdoor living (and entertaining) environment.

There are more options for a patio than a slab of concrete under an overhang outside your home's sliding glass door.

THE TREND TODAY is toward enclosed patios. These are bright, airy sun rooms that capture heat and light with all arched windows and skylights.

A contractor who specializes in patios can explain options such as garden windows, wood beam ceilings, brick or block walls, lattice screens, window awnings, sliding doors and more.

If all you really want is to cover that ugly concrete slab, consider one of the new aggregate-and-epoxy surfaces. These create smooth glistening coating of tiny pebbles that resemble a stream bed. The surface is durable enough to park on — and it completely covers cracks and other imperfections.

Other patio "paving" options you'll want to consider include tile, brick, slabs of stone and out-door carpeting.

ACCORDING TO lumber and hardware retailers, decks have become one of the top do-it-yourself home improvement projects.

Home owners are building decks on new homes and old ones, to fit around pools, play areas, trees, water gardens and hot tubs.

"It is something that normally just about any of the home owners can handle," says Joe Carter, owner of a lumber company.

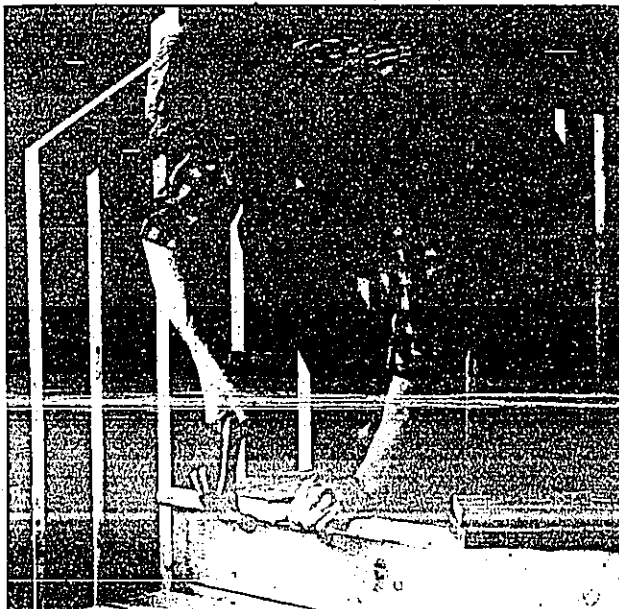
Decks are a relatively inexpensive way to add living space. Carter says even the most elaborate deck wouldn't cost much more than \$4.25 per square foot in materials.

Experts suggest making a deck an extension of a high-traffic room. A deck set off a kitchen or a family room is far more likely to be useful than one extending from a back hallway or a little-used dining room.

In addition to consulting the experts at your local hardware and lumber stores, check your local bookstores and video dealers for helpful how-to information on deck building.

THE LIVIN' HAS never been easier or more comfortable, thanks to new materials, finishes and designs for outdoor furniture.

The technology is impressive. Drench a chair or chaise with rain, pool or salt water. It won't rust. Scorching sun won't



Home improvement projects such as a deck are made easier with the aid of Weyerhaeuser DesignCenter. By inputting some basic information, consumers can choose from unlimited design options. A complete story on the new service is on Page 4.

cause it to yellow, fade, split or crack. And it's cool, too, as well as comfortable and well-designed.

Colorful floral-print and striped umbrellas seem almost transparent, but don't let that fool you. They're made of a durable new vinyl-coated polyester mesh designed to screen out light and heat.

New polyester cushions are designed so that water simply runs through them; they're never soggy. When the sun comes out, the cushions dry as good as new, their colors as bright as ever. They also resist mildew and are tough enough for kids.

Outdoor chairs and tables made of tubular steel look elegant but require no upkeep — they're treated with a permanent finish.

THANKS TO 26th century technology, the lacy designs of Victorian wrought-iron benches, tables and chairs are available today. They're virtually indestructible — outdoor furnishings experts describe them as "three generation furniture."

Wrought iron once came only in black or white, but now it's blooming in vivid brights and soft pastels.

Molded plastic lends itself to handsome

and versatile pieces for porches, patios and gardens. A dining table converts to a coffee table; another becomes several small tables and a folding cart. Lacquered resins protect the surface from rain, salt-water and ultraviolet radiation.

Aluminum has the advantage of being lightweight and inexpensive, but it should be protected from the corrosive effects of seawater. Manufacturers suggest applying a coat of auto wax once a year.

Director's chairs now come in three heights — counter, bar and standard. Canvas seats are available in a rainbow of colors, with finishes that resist mildew, vinyl seats also are bright and practical. If you entertain frequently, keep a stash of these folded in your garage, ready to go.

M-M-M SMELL THAT steak, sizzling on the barbecue. Wrap those ears of corn in foil and pop 'em on, too.

No patio or deck is complete without a barbecue or grill. Now ones are sleeker and more efficient than ever.

Consider having a masonry contractor add a built-in barbecue to your patio or deck.