

Try these repair remedies

The refrigerator door on our Amman side-by-side refrigerator seems to have warped and gone out of shape on the bottom and left side. How do I repair this? All the door seals are good but at the bottom left they don't contact the door frame so they can't seal properly.

Sounds as if your door may need adjustment. The first thing to do is to open the refrigerator door and remove everything from the door shelves on the liner. Then make a careful check to see that there is nothing sticking out from the refrigerator itself and that there is no debris or other object stopping the door open.

Next, roll back the door gasket. Loosen all the retaining screws around the door seal. Once these screws are loosened, the door will lose much of its rigidity. Now, shut the door and hand

shape it to fit the face of the cabinet by pushing in on the door at all four corners. Then, open the door gently and tighten the screws in the corner that didn't fit before. Shut the door again gently to see that it has not changed shape. Repeat the door and tighten the rest of the screws.

Sometimes, after aligning the door, the door gasket will no longer seal properly. If it does not rest tightly against the face where it seals (test by closing the door on a dollar bill and then pull the bill through the crack), you should feel some drag) you may have to replace the gasket or shim it out so it does seal. The easiest method is to put something resilient — such as silicone caulk — behind the gasket to make it contact the cabinet.

A few years ago I installed white vinyl siding on my house. Now I have a problem with rust stains running down all over the siding be-

cause the nails I used were poorly galvanized and started to rust. I tried to remove the stains with vinegar, mineral spirits, household bleach, steel wool and TSP, but nothing helped. Do you have a solution?

Oxalic acid will remove your rust stains. Dissolve one tablespoon of crystals in one cup of warm water. Wear rubber gloves and goggles. If you can't find oxalic acid, use DuPont's Heavy Duty Ceiling System Cleaner for cars. It has oxalic acid in it. This treatment, however, will only remove rust stains and not prevent further rusting. Try painting the nail heads with anti-rust paint. The problem could have been prevented by using aluminum nails. However, if you have to hang siding over a hard substrate, such as asbestos shingles, then use hot-dipped galvanized nails.

Common mistakes stunt tree growth

AP — Establishing trees on a lot is an important step, and landscaping professionals suggest buying the largest trees possible. But there is another factor even more important than their cost: The faster the trees grow, the sooner homeowners have cooling shade and a look of permanence for the lot.

Homeowners sometimes lose or stunt young trees because of some common mistakes. Lack of water is the biggest danger. It takes a new tree up to three years to develop roots to make up for those lost in transplanting. During that time, they are vulnerable to drought.

When first transplanted, trees have so few roots that they may not even be able to take up all the water available. If new trees wilt badly, prune some of the top branches to balance the loss of roots. Shower the foliage until wilting stops. To water the roots, make a doughnut-like depression a few inches deep two to three feet from the trunk so water will not run off. Not long ago, a dish-like depression extending the same distance around the tree was considered ideal. But the doughnut works better because it prevents puddling around the trunk, where water could cause rot.

Water deeply — as much as five gallons for a three- to four-foot tree each week that there is less than one inch of rainfall.

Wrapping and staking is sometimes required by nurseries if their

guarantee is to be honored. Wrapping the lower trunk with tree wrap or heavy paper will prevent sunburn until the canopy of leaves grows enough to shade the trunk. Wrapping also prevents some damage from insects and power tools, such as lawn mowers and trimmers. Use masking tape, and leave the wrap in place. It will eventually rot off.

Staking was, until recently, a rule without exception. But new research has shown that some staking is necessary for trees to develop strength and resilience. Too much staking will keep the roots constantly under stress and prevent them from settling and spreading. So, use the minimum staking necessary, perhaps none for small transplants. Remove ties to test the tree for strength, and take out stakes when they're not needed.

Another danger to trees is girdling. This often happens to new trees that come with a wire-label loosely attached. As the tree grows, the trunk or branch grows so much in circumference that the wire is embedded in the bark. Growth will then be restricted, and there will be swelling above this point.

Girdling can kill a tree quicker than any type of injury because it can entirely cut off the flow of nutrients and water to the branches farther up the tree. To avoid girdling, remove anything that could ever bind.

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