

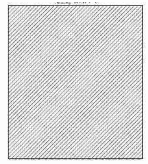


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A DIGITAL TOOLBOX TO HELP YOU PLAY, PLAN AND LEARN E6

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20 top apps

Local pros share their favorite digital tools for the home

BY LARA EWEN
Special to Newsday

That new iPhone 4S (or iPad, or Android or Galaxy) you got from your favorite person this month is amazing, but it's not nearly as amazing as it could be. So we asked Long Island home experts to recommend which apps they think will change the way you look for home advice.

While computer programs are no substitute for hands-on experience, the 20 apps featured here are a great starting point for anyone looking to add an arsenal of tools to his or her home-improvement plans. The best part? Many are free, and we've already done the research for you.



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gardening

THE EXPERT

Richard Gibney, Wading River landscape architect and certified arborist



HIS PICK Dirr's Tree and Shrub Finder

(\$14.99, Timber Press Inc.): "Michael Dirr is a living legend in the world of trees and shrubs," says Gibney.

"His books are the bibles of horticulture for landscape architects, nursery-people and gardeners. This app brings his work to your fingertips. I'm sure he will be adding content and photos, as he has always updated his publications. This has a large database and you can trust that Michael Dirr's information is accurate."



OTHER GREAT APPS



Leafsnap (Free, Columbia University, University of Maryland, and Smithsonian Institution) allows users to photograph a leaf, flower or fruit and identify it.



Botany Buddy (\$9.99, AVAI Ventures Inc.) offers a database of more than 2,000 native and ornamental plant species, trees and shrubs.



Audubon Field Guides (\$4.99 to \$19.99) cover everything from trees and insects to butterflies and wildflowers.



organizing

THE EXPERT

Cynthia Braun, Lake Grove certified professional organizer




HER PICK Family Organizer (Free, Cozi): Braun calls this an all-in-one organizer app for your home. It includes unlimited to-do lists, unlimited grocery lists, shared to-do lists, a calendar and more.

"Having to-do lists at your fingertips will make your home more organized," says Braun. For example, sharing a grocery list among all the members of the house means no more double-buying or running out of milk. And shared to-do lists are an organizer's dream. "If Dad has to mow the lawn and Mom has to get the flowers and the kids have to weed, it will pop up on everyone's entry," says Braun. "Joint projects in the home get done quicker."



OTHER GREAT APPS

 **52 Organizing Missions** (\$9.99, Happiness Strategies) are 30-minute tasks, complete with a timer, meant to encourage users to tidy up, one task at a time, from filling one giant trash bag to “detoxing” a car.

 **Home Routines** (\$3.99, Wunderbear) allows the user to create routine checklists of everyday chores that automatically refresh every day (with a gold star given each time a task is completed).

 **Nest Egg Inventory** (\$4.99, Winprogger Llc) keeps an inventory of everything you own by scanning the bar codes of belongings (manual entry works, too) and noting its location, warranty information, cost and more.



interior design

THE EXPERT

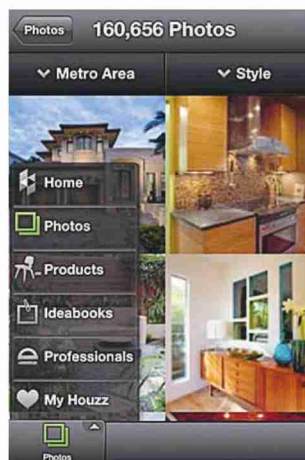
Eileen Kathryn Boyd, Huntington interior designer



HER PICK

Houzz Interior Design Ideas

(Free, Houzz Inc.): “This is a one-stop app, offering a great selection of everything you need to furnish and style your home,” says Boyd. Houzz sorts its massive library of more than 200,000 interior design images by categories of style, room or location, and makes it easy to save the ones you like to your own personal scrapbook. “The visuals are key,” says Boyd. “Allowing people to see a product in use gives them the opportunity to envision the item in their own space and lifestyle.”



OTHER GREAT APPS



DécOrganizer (\$2.99, Aisling Apps) keeps all your decorating ideas organized in one place, so you'll never forget how big your couch is or where you saw the plates you loved.



Dream Home HD (\$1.99, Apalon) features an extensive variety of decorating ideas from professional designers, integrated with a music feature that allows to you to listen to your favorite tunes while browsing.



Remodelista (\$2.99, Remodelista LLC) is an online interior design sourcebook app with a celebrity following (Gwyneth Paltrow is an avowed fan) and daily updates to its design archives.



OTHER GREAT APPS



Magic Plan (Free, Sensopia) lets you create a new floor plan with drawings made from pictures of your existing home.



ARCAT (Free, ARCAT Inc.) is like a giant online phone book of every home product you'll ever need, from towel bars to attic insulation. It lets you search by manufacturer name or product category, and gives you contact and buying information.



Photosynth (Free, Microsoft Corp.) capture 3-D photos of any space that inspires you so you and your architect can be on the same page when the designing starts. This fun, panoramic app converts still photos of any room into a 3-D walk-through.

architecture

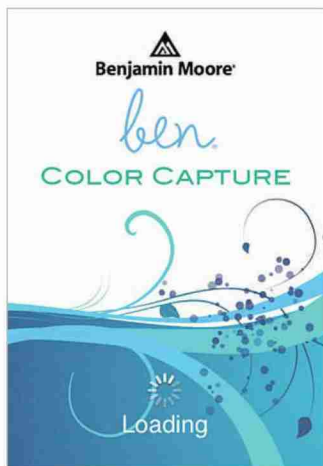
THE EXPERT

Mark Vincent Kruse, East Meadow architect who is president of the American Institute of Architects Long Island chapter



HIS PICK Benjamin Moore Color Capture

(Free, Benjamin Moore & Co.): Scan in whatever you're looking at with this app, and it will tell you what paint color is the best match for that shade. While other companies have color-pick apps, Kruse says he prefers this one because it's feature-packed and user-friendly. "Benjamin Moore is pretty much used across the industry, and this is simple to use," he says. "You can locate a retail paint store within the app, and it features Moore's color wheel and their color cards, so I have access to their entire line on the fly."



home improvement

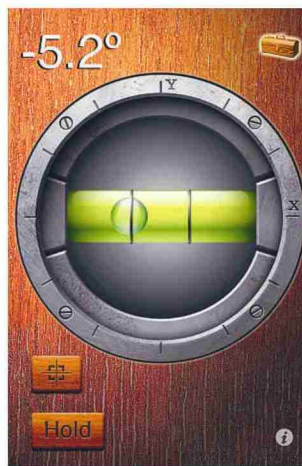
THE EXPERT

Stephen Fanuka, celebrity contractor from Manhasset, host of DIY Network's "Million Dollar Contractor" and co-author of the new book "What's a Homeowner to Do?" (Artisan Books, \$17.95)



HIS PICK iHandy Carpenter

(\$1.99, iHandySoft Inc.): Carrying around a lot of gadgets can load a contractor down. This app solves a lot of problems for Fanuka. "iHandy Carpenter has a level, a ruler, a plumb bob," he says. "But I really use this for the level. So many times I'm on a job site, and I can use this to tell whether the floor is level or not." Fanuka himself uses the free version, which also is available.



OTHER GREAT APPS



I.D. Wood (\$4.99, Double Dog Studios) provides detailed information on more than 200 types of wood, along with tips on lumber cutting as well as a thickness-measuring screen and a nail-size reference.



Home Sizer (\$2.99, Arm-chair Design) calculates your home's gross square footage, estimates your home's value and will tell you whether that expansion you're planning will add real value to your home.



Project Quote Estimate (\$4.99, KAD Software Llc) is a renovation app that lets you enter as much information about your project as possible, then estimates how much it will cost.