

Barn Renovation

Update your existing barn structure with expert renovation tips.

By Sarah Christie

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Power Wash

Dust, dirt, cobwebs and sun damage can combine to make your barn's exterior look shabby and dull. What a difference a good scrubbing can make! Power washers make short work of what would otherwise be an impossibly time-consuming job. They are standard equipment for most house painters, who can easily finish the job in less than half a day. Or you can rent the unit yourself for the weekend and have a "barn washing" party!

Landscaping

If your barn wasn't designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and doesn't quite meet your aesthetic standards, try softening/obscuring the look with some strategic landscaping. Fire resistant shrubs and strips of green lawn can be accented with flowers, to add a little character as well as extra safety insurance. Shade trees also help create a sense of place around the barn while keeping the area cool in the summer, but avoid fire-prone species such as eucalyptus and pine.

Summer Fun

A quick way to create a new look is to temporarily replace your stall doors with colorful "racing webs" or stall screens for the summer. If your stall doors can be easily removed and stored out of the way, these easy to install replacements improve air circulation while they brighten up the décor. They can be customized to match your tack trunks or farm colors, or coordinated with any outdoor event such as a wedding or Fourth of July party.

Smile in the Isle

If your barn isle is simply compacted dirt, consider covering it with interlocking rubber tiles. They provide superior traction, cut down on mud and dust, and create a new look almost instantly. What's more, they are easy to install, and much more manageable than heavy stall mats.

Mud Be Gone

For stalls with outdoor runs that turn to swamps in the winter, an engineered subsurface designed to drain water away from the barn will keep the area useable all year, and improve the overall health of your horse. A licensed contractor can excavate the area, and replace the native soil with a system of compacted gravel and sand to improve drainage and reduce erosion.

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