

Avoid pitfalls of home repairs

While property experts spruik location, location, location, Luke Van Dyck is yelling maintenance, maintenance, maintenance.

The Newport builder and owner of LVD Industries cannot believe how often he is called to a job which has escalated into thousands of dollars just because a simple repair was not made earlier.

"It's crazy," he said. "A home is the biggest investment most people make, yet they maintain their cars more regularly. Jobs which end up costing homeowners \$20,000 could have been done for \$800 if maintenance had been done."

Van Dyck, a television presenter on *Australian Renovation*, has launched his first book *Home Maintenance*.

"We talk about the common things which can go wrong and can be avoided," he said.

"The book teaches you to learn the lingo, to get familiar with your tools and your handskills. Don't jump into a big project straight away, start small and work your way up."

Van Dyck said the trouble with DIY television shows is that the tradies don't actually teach the viewers how to do jobs properly.

"Houses do not get renovated in two days," he said. The book also features a guide for homeowners to protect and educate themselves. "Quite often it's the



Luke Van Dyck advises homeowners to do research before embarking on any project.

homeowner's fault that things go wrong because they don't do their research," he said. "They'll accept the cheapest price without checking out the person quoting it. Check the contractor has a licence, make sure the licence covers the work you need done, make sure the name on the contract is the same as the one on the licence. All these things will protect you."

A third-generation builder, Van Dyck said he more or less fell into the building

industry after graduating from Narrabeen Sports High. "I spent all my holidays and weekends on building sites with dad earning pocket money," he said.

"I got good grades at the end of year 12 but thought it was silly not to jump into an industry I knew and understood."

However, while Van Dyck advises on choosing the right contractors and how to manage them, he encourages homeowners to have a go at fixing problems themselves.

WIN A BOOK



If you'd like a copy of *Home Maintenance*, tell us in 25 words or less why you need handyman help. Write your response on the back of an envelope and send it to Home Handyman, *The Manly Daily*, 26 Sydney Rd, Manly, 2095. Or enter online at manlydaily.com.au/ competitions. The competition closes on Friday, August 26. For full terms and conditions visit manlydaily.com.au/ competitions

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