People have an innate desire to work with their hands, to complete a job from start to finish, and even though desire doesn't always match ability, we want to try.

Obviously, some jobs should be left to professionals; in such cases, we're ready to step in. In the meantime, you can test your skill level with the following DIY projects.

Let's talk about air conditioning.

Air conditioning terminology can be confusing. For example, who is MERV, and why should you care? Well, MERV isn't a *who* but a *what*.

MERV is an acronym for Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value. MERV measures how much matter or dirt can pass through your air conditioner's filter. The purpose of a filter is to trap particles, and the most efficient filters prevent excessive particles and dirt from getting through.
The filter's MERV rating shows how well it performs based on the smallest particles it can catch. The MERV scale ranges from one to 20 and measures particle size in micrometers. For optimal filtration, choose an air filter with a MERV rating between 17 and 20. Very few, if any, particles will pass through a filter rated this high. It's an ideal choice for allergy sufferers. However, a filter with a MERV rating from five to twelve can still do an acceptable job of filtering particles. Remember to replace it at least every thirty days, though higher-end filters can last longer before needing a change.

Changing Air Conditioner Filters

Surprisingly, dirt can clog a filter so much that it hampers airflow, affecting the unit's efficiency and making it work harder. Replacing the filter is a quick and easy DIY task that can also extend the lifespan of your unit.

There are just a few key points to keep in mind:

• Purchase the correct size filter for your unit. The manufacturer's manual will specify this, or you can find it online.
• Some filters have arrows indicating which way to insert them. Always ensure the arrow points "up."
• It's a good idea to turn off the unit before replacing the filter, especially if the filter is located at the base of the air conditioner.

Air Quality

Considering that the average family spends about 90 percent of their time indoors, how much more important is good air quality in recent days? The air we breathe has never been more critical. If your home's heating and cooling system is pushing out poor-quality air, it's a red flag. While clean filters are vital, DIY enthusiasts should take a two-pronged approach to improve

indoor air quality. Don't neglect your air ducts—what you can't see could harm you, your lungs, and your health.

Air Ducts

Dirty air ducts are gross. Don't believe it? Check out the vent covers—dust might be visible outside, accumulated on the surface. Open a vent and shine a flashlight inside. Is there dust and debris along the inside walls? These signs point to the need for duct cleaning. Your family is breathing in anything caked on the duct walls—including pollutants, allergens, mold, and irritants—creating an unhealthy environment.

UV lights are a great option for removing harmful mold and viruses on duct walls. An FPL Home technician can install UV lights inside the vents. Duct cleaning is complex, and doing it improperly could expose your family to hazardous substances like asbestos. Rather than attempting it yourself, consider calling in a professional. An FPL Home technician will take necessary precautions to avoid exposing you to dangerous materials. Letting them clean and sanitize your ducts will help reduce allergic reactions and exposure to toxic elements.

If you'd like to improve your home's air quality or inquire about other services from an FPL Home technician, call (833) 437-5466. You can also schedule an appointment by visiting: https://www.fplhome.com/content/fpl-home/getaquote.html.

[1] https://indoor.lbl.gov/sites/all/files/lbnl-47713.pdf