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BASEMENT REMODEL IDEAS

HOMES

Are you thinking about finishing your basement? While this can be an expensive project, you'll increase both your living space and property value. Plus, you can easily adapt this versatile space to suit your family's needs over time.



Workshop. Whether you enjoy sewing, woodworking, scrapbooking or wine making, you'll have the space you need to store all your supplies and tools.

Home office. You'll probably find it easier to concentrate in a room that's cut off from the rest of the house. Plus, you're less likely to be disturbed during conference calls.

Guest bedroom. This is an ideal way to offer your visitors more privacy. And if there's enough room to fit in a bathroom, all the better.

Cellar. Whether you want to store wine, root vegetables or canned goods, make sure the space is well ventilated and the humidity level is controlled.

Laundry room. In addition to freeing up space in the bathroom, you'll finally have the room you need to fold and iron clothes.

Playroom. Give your kids plenty of space to run around and store their toys without cluttering the main living areas of the house.

Personal gym. For this to be a practical option, the ceiling should be high enough to accommodate stretching and jumping jacks.

Keep in mind that natural light is limited in a basement. Therefore, you'll want to opt for an open-concept design or glass doors and partitions if possible.

TIPS FOR DESIGNING YOUR HOME GYM

Do you feel like having a space where you can exercise in the comfort of your own home? Now's the perfect time to get started! Here are a few tips to help you design the perfect home gym.

First, whether you choose to use your garage or your basement, make sure that you set up your personal gym in a brightly lit and well-ventilated area. In order to maximize the square footage available and create a space that's conducive to exercise, divide the room into different sections. For example, you could dedicate one area to cardio, another to strength training and yet another to stretching.

Plan and decorate. All too often, people set up a personal training space without giving it much thought. They randomly pile exercise machines and accessories into the basement and then over the following weeks or months, they feel guilty because they're using them less and less often. To stay motivated and exercise on a regular basis, attractive surroundings are a must. Get started by looking for inspiration from pictures of private gyms found in decorating magazines and on the Internet.

Stay Motivated. Design a space that's visually appealing and that you wouldn't mind spending a few hours each week in by painting the room your favorite color or hanging some inspiring art on the walls. You could also put up a chalkboard (or bulletin board) to track your progress on. Let your creativity run wild by putting up wall murals or wallpaper with original patterns. Finally, consider investing in a good sound system that will encourage you to keep moving to the beat of your favorite tunes.

Buying your equipment. It is possible to create a home gym without it costing you an arm and a leg. Retailers offer a wide range of bodybuilding and cardiovascular exercise machines for all budgets. A less expensive option is to buy used equipment. Stocking up on basic equipment, such as free weights, elastic bands, an exercise ball and a yoga mat, is always a great way to start.



DESIGN AN OUTDOOR LOUNGE AREA

Oh, how great it feels to relax around a cozy fire. Do you own an outdoor fireplace? Perhaps you're thinking of investing in one? Here are several tips for designing the perfect outdoor lounge area.



First, make sure you've dedicated enough space for your family to relax comfortably. Adirondack chairs, swings, wooden benches, wicker loungers, hammocks — opt for variety! And don't forget to include enough blankets and cushions to create a soft, cozy environment.

Next, place one or more side tables around the seating area so that you and your family can set down glasses, plates, phones and any other objects you prefer to keep close at hand.

Décor plays an important role on a deck. Just as in the rest of your home, the design of your outdoor oasis should reflect your tastes. Opt for rugs, cushions, and accessories that show your furniture off to advantage.

Add a trellis or create a screen with plants for more privacy. Use different colored plant pots for garden herbs or to make a pretty annual flower garden. Hanging pots will also help define the space and create an impression of privacy.

Highlight your landscaping with strategically placed light fixtures throughout your yard. Hang garlands of twinkling lights in your trees, and line the path between your house and your lounge area with decorative lanterns. This way, you'll create a space that's not only warm but also safe to enjoy at night.

Finally, shine the spotlight on the main features of your landscaping. Use projectors to make your pool or water fountain shimmer. Once lit, your plants, your pathways and even your pool will give your garden a magical feel after sundown.



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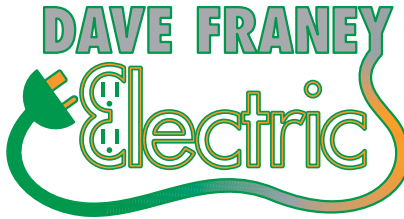
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GROW YOUR OWN FOOD

GARDEN

Gardening burns calories, strengthens immunity, relieves stress and can have an uplifting effect on your mood. If you're looking for a way to stay positive during the pandemic, consider planting a resiliency garden.



Growing food in uncertain times.
As concerns about food security and pricing rise, many people are becoming more interested in gardening as a way to supplement what they buy at the grocery store. Though you probably won't be able to grow everything you eat, getting some of it from your own backyard can make you more self-sufficient.

In addition, gardening has been shown to have therapeutic value that can offer relief. The combination of mild exercise and exposure to nature and sunlight can lower blood pressure and increase your level of serotonin (the "feel-good" chemical produced in your brain). What's more, many studies indicate that exposure to biodiverse green spaces is associated with less depression, anxiety and stress.

A tradition with historical roots.
The concept of the resiliency garden is inspired by campaigns launched in several countries during World War I and II. While soldiers fought on the frontlines, governments encouraged their citizens to plant victory gardens in their backyards and in public parks.


The purpose of growing fruits and vegetables was to prevent a food shortage, but also to boost morale on the home front. Although the Coronavirus pandemic is a very different kind of global crisis, planting a garden may prove to be just as empowering.

Getting started. Growing your own food is easier than you think. All you need is some seeds (or seedlings), decent


soil (either in a garden or containers) and plenty of sunlight (at least six to eight hours).

To avoid becoming overwhelmed, it's a good idea to start small. Try to only grow what you and your family will eat, and opt for foods you already like. Staggering your plantings can allow you to harvest the same crop at different times.

Remember, the main thing you'll need to do is water, weed and feed your plants throughout the growing season. Even if you don't think you have a green thumb, you can do it. Happy growing!



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THE BEGINNER’S GUIDE TO GARDENING

Want to grow your own vegetables but don’t have any gardening experience? No problem. Simply follow these eight guidelines to successfully start your own vegetable garden.



1. Plan your garden.
Determine what materials you’ll need (gardening tools like hoes and spades, soil, fertilizer, etc.) including the seeds or plants themselves. You’ll also need to consider how much time you’re willing to devote to your garden each day. Don’t be too ambitious about how much you take on — a garden that’s too big can quickly become overwhelming.

2. Choose a location.
Decide where your garden will be located and what size it will be. You should also consider whether you’ll

plant your garden directly in the ground or if you’ll construct raised beds.

3. Think about sunlight.
When deciding where to grow your vegetable garden, you should make sure to select a place in your yard that receives an abundance of sunlight. If you choose a location with partial shade, make sure the garden still gets at least six hours of sunlight each day.

4. Prepare the ground.
Whether you’re growing vegetables in raised beds or directly in the ground, it’s

important to mix the soil you’re using with compost or manure to enrich it with valuable nutrients. Once prepared, consider spreading the mixture over a layer of a material that promotes water drainage, such as gravel.

5. Select your vegetables.
Choose vegetables that grow well in your climate and are manageable for novice gardeners. Carrots, green beans, cucumbers and zucchini are all relatively easy to grow. Other veggies, like lettuce and tomatoes, are not only undemanding but also yield large quantities of produce, making them particularly satisfying for first-time gardeners.



- 6. Plant carefully.**
Choose when to plant your vegetables with caution — wait until there’s no longer a risk for frost but before it becomes too hot. Keep in mind that the sooner you’re able to get your garden in the ground, the sooner you’ll get your first harvest. Make sure to leave plenty of space between plants to allow them adequate room to grow.
- 7. Water correctly.**
Immediately after planting, give your garden a generous watering and continue watering every few days (and more in periods of drought or extreme heat). To help plants absorb the maximum amount of water, douse them early in the morning using a low-pressure setting on your hose or sprinkler.
- 8. Fertilize regularly.**
It’s also important to add fertilizer to your garden periodically so that your plants get the nutrients they need to flourish. You can use either natural fertilizing substances, like manure or compost, or purchase a synthetic blend.

Not everyone has a backyard or enough green space on their property for a regular garden. Fortunately, many of the vegetables you might plant in your yard can thrive in pots on your balcony or patio. Here are just some of the many vegetables that can be grown in containers:

- Tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, green onions, radishes, beans, peas, leafy greens, cucumbers and beetroots are all suitable options for a patio garden.
- Once you’ve selected your vegetables, choose pots with good drainage and enough depth to accommodate the plant’s growth. You’ll also need to water your vegetables every day and ensure they get enough sunlight.
- Finally, it’s best to use potting soil for your balcony garden, as it contains more nutrients than other types and can help prevent root rot.



GROW WITH CONFIDENCE!
Worried about starting a garden on your own? Visit a nearby Yamhill County nursery or gardening store. Your local pros will help you avoid beginner’s mistakes and show you how to get the most out of your first vegetable garden.



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INVASIVE BUGS OF THE NORTHWEST

If a non-native species is introduced into a new ecosystem, it can wreak havoc on the environment. Since it has no natural predators, there's nothing to stop it from rapidly increasing its population and taking over.

AZALEA LACE BUGS
If you have silvery, white or yellow spots on the leaves of your azaleas or rhododendrons, it's likely that these insects are present. If not controlled, lace bugs can cause significant damage. Since they're usually attracted to unhealthy plants, the best way to avoid an infestation is to properly care for your shrubs.

BALSAM WOOLLY ADELGIDS
Although these aphid-like insects are minuscule and easy to miss, an infestation can kill an entire tree within a few years. They feed on true fir trees by injecting their saliva into the plant's tissue. This inhibits bud formation and eventually kills the tree. In most cases, an infected tree should be removed before the insects move on to other trees. Homeowners can help protect the biodiversity of the Pacific Northwest by learning how to identify the presence of an invasive species on their property and promptly addressing infestations.

PLANTS THAT HELP TO REPEL PESTS

Did you know there are a variety of plants that naturally repel insects? Here's how to ward off a few common backyard pests using flowers and herbs.

ANTS
In addition to feeding on sugary fruits and vegetables, ants farm tiny leaf-eating insects called aphids. To repel ants, plant tansy, lemon balm, mint, mug wort or chrysanthemums. Catnip also works well but may attract feline visitors.

MOSQUITOES
To keep these bugs at bay, grow scented plants like lavender, lemon balm, lemon verbena or basil. Mosquitoes also dislike the smell of citronella geraniums, which can brighten your garden with splashes of pink, red or purple.

JAPANESE BEETLES
These metallic-looking bugs aren't picky about what they eat, but they're especially fond of roses, string beans and raspberries. To ward off Japanese beetles, plant tansy, catnip, chives or marigolds. The smell and taste of the leaves on these plants will repel them. Finally, while flies are relatively harmless, they can be a nuisance. You can ward them off with herbs such as basil, lavender and rosemary.

HOW TO HELP RESTORE OUR EARTH

The theme for this year’s Earth Day, which takes place on April 22, is “Restore Our Earth.” It’s based on the growing understanding that humans can do more than simply mitigate the impacts of climate change. In addition to transforming the world’s energy, urban and industrial systems, we can restore and use natural processes to combat climate change.

Earth Day 2021: a focus on nature-based solutions

To reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the power of nature can be harnessed in a number of ways. Solutions include planting trees, restoring coastal wetlands and adopting agricultural practices that improve soil health.

In addition to capturing carbon emissions from the air and sequestering them in plants, soil and sediments, restored ecosystems increase biodiversity and help provide cleaner air and water.

In fact, according to the Global Commission on Adaptation, these types of ecological restoration projects can provide one-third of the climate mitigation needed over the next decade to keep global warming below two degrees Celsius.

Communities ranging from rural towns to major cities can become more resilient against the impacts of climate change by restoring and protecting natural ecosystems.

For example, restoring mangrove forests helps protect coastal regions from rising seas and storm surges. Doing so is significantly cheaper than building breakwaters and other infrastructure. Plus, mangroves have the added benefit of storing carbon, preventing erosion and helping to sustain local fisheries.

For more information about Earth Day and how you can take action against climate change, visit earthday.org

An overview of eco-design and eco-friendly products

An “eco-design” product or service is one that’s created using methods of production that limit its environmental impact. This approach requires companies to take various factors into consideration, including the environmental and financial costs, the lifespan of the product and the ways the manufacturing process can be optimized. In some cases, eco-certification standards must also be considered.

Additionally, when a company develops a product in accordance with ecological design principles, it takes into account the environmental impact of every step in the manufacturing process, from sourcing materials to product distribution. This includes the potential depletion of natural resources, pollution, greenhouse gas emission and energy consumption.

By creating products in this manner, companies can meet both the expectations of increasingly eco-conscious consumers and the requirements of local environmental protection regulations.

Products and services are considered eco-friendly if they provide the same or better results compared to the generic version, while also creating considerably less air, water or land pollution. These products are generally manufactured using eco-design principles, but they also have little to no impact on the environment during their lifespan. Additionally, eco-friendly products are either biodegradable or can be recycled or repurposed as part of a circular economy.

If you want to use your purchasing power to help protect the environment, find out which Yamhill County businesses have ecofriendly initiatives and practices, and be sure to buy their products or services.

4 activities to teach kids about the environment

Do you want to teach your children about the importance of protecting the planet? Here are four fun activities you can do as a family.

1. Gardening. Whether you grow herbs on a windowsill or plant a vegetable garden in your backyard, this is a hands-on way for children to learn about responsibility and how food grows.

2. Planting a tree. Once it’s in the ground, encourage your kids to observe how their tree changes with the seasons and provides a home for animals. They can even give it a name.

3. Crafting. Challenge your kids to make art out of cardboard boxes, bottle caps, plastic bottles, toilet paper rolls and other recyclable materials. A quick online search will provide plenty of inspiration.

4. Exploring. Children can learn a lot simply by getting close to nature on a hike or bike ride. Alternatively, you can visit a local farm, botanical garden or wildlife refuge. Many places also offer virtual tours.

Regardless of which activity you do, make sure to use the opportunity to start a conversation with your kids. Depending on their age, you can talk about how the environment affects their lives, why it’s important to respect nature and the ways they can help protect the planet.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

On April 22, celebrate Earth Day as a family by coming up with ways you can be more eco-friendly at home and in your daily lives.

“*The environment is where we all meet, where we all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share. It is not only a mirror of ourselves, but a focusing lens on what we can become.*”

— Lady Bird Johnson



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5 TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR CREDIT SCORE

REAL ESTATE

Whether you're submitting a rental application or applying for a mortgage, it's important to have a good credit score. If your current credit score is suboptimal, here are five things you can do to rebuild it.



Pay your bills on time. Always pay bills in full before the due date. If you can't pay the total amount, at least make the minimum required payment.

Don't max out your cards. It's best to use no more than half of your available credit (for example, don't put more than \$500 on a credit card with a \$1,000 limit). If you always max out your card, lenders will consider you a high-risk loan candidate. Also, never surpass your credit card limit.

Be a loyal customer. Don't switch credit cards or financial institutions unnecessarily. The age of your credit history impacts your credit score.

Get credit checks infrequently. If a lender or company files a request to view your credit report, which is known as a hard inquiry, it'll impact your credit score. Conversely, checking your credit yourself, which is known as a soft inquiry, won't affect your score.

Have multiple types of credit. Using more than one type of credit (for example, a credit card, line of credit and mortgage) tends to improve your credit score. Just be sure that you're able to pay back everything you borrow.

To get more advice about building up your credit score, reach out to a qualified financial adviser.

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7 offers in 3 days! Move-in ready single level in SW McMinnville! Featuring bright windows, 2 updated bathrooms, a well-equipped galley kitchen, and large dining room. The master bedroom has bathroom and large closet. A large covered deck offers outdoor dining or entertaining, and garden lovers will enjoy the raised garden beds in the fenced backyard. New siding in 2019.

MLS# 21311316

Lacey Summers

Broker

Bella Casa Real Estate Group

503-435-7059

lacey@thebellacasagroup.com

\$425,000

1924 NE Lucy Belle St.

Elegant Corner Lot Home

Wonderfully maintained home in desirable and quiet neighborhood near Grandhaven Elementary. 1934 sq ft with 3 bed, 2.5 baths. The vaulted main living area has a gas fireplace and flows to the dining & kitchen. Owners suite on the main floor with 2 bedrooms upstairs PLUS a large bonus room. Covered backyard patio. Buyer Representation.

Lacey Summers

Broker

Bella Casa Real Estate Group

503-435-7059

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\$675,000

2961 NW McDonald Ln.

Luxury Home on 0.39 Acre Lot

Multiple offers received. Private luxurious home tucked away on a hard-to-find large lot. 3500 sq ft, 5 bed/4 baths and completely renovated in 2013 with exquisite high-end finishes and woods. Formal living & dining rooms plus family room. Gourmet kitchen w/ Bosch & JennAir appliances. Main level master suite with fireplace, custom closet, claw foot tub + tile shower. 3 gas fireplaces, built-ins, solid doors, 2 bonus rooms. 3 sets of French doors lead to the professionally designed landscape & wrap-around porch. 3 car garage. **MLS#21503818**

Lacey Summers

Broker

Bella Casa Real Estate Group

503-435-7059

lacey@thebellacasagroup.com

\$747,000

McMinnville

Wonderful Home on Small Acreage

Views of farmland, coast range, large stand of Douglas firs & access to the N Yamhill River. Home w/room to spread out! Kitchen/Dining room combo w/ fireplace insert make for cozy living, living room w/fireplace, family room, 3BRs & bathroom. Master suite w/walk in closet, bathroom, jetted tub, walk in shower, great retreat! Fabulous private, oversized deck w/gazebo! Shop w/RV & parking, 2nd area for shop space! One of a kind! **MLS# 21344663**

Jen Feero, Broker

Willamette West Realtors

503-708-2658

JenFeero@gmail.com

\$836,000

McMinnville

On Top Of The World

Enjoy vast city, mountain, and valley views from every corner in this spacious, custom built, one owner home. Highlights include: Brazilian cherry hardwood floors, heated tile floors in master bath, closet organizers, two staircases, fabulous chef's kitchen and pantry. Truly must see to appreciate the detail and livability of this wonderful home.

MLS# 21181273

Mac Wittke

Broker

Bella Casa Real Estate Group

503-577-9636

mac@thebellacasagroup.com

\$1,200,000

McMinnville

Fabulous Custom on 2 Acres!

Stunning views out the great room & master bedroom! 4 BR, 4 BA with space to spread out on the main floor w/office, sitting/dining room, spacious chef's kitchen w/granite, SS appliances, maple cabinets, nook and great room w/gas fireplace, built-ins & wonderful view! Spacious master suite tub, shower, walk-in closet & heated tile floors. Lower has family room w/pellet stove, kitchenette & master suite #2 w/potential for dual living! **MLS# 20470690**

Jen Feero, Broker

Willamette West Realtors

503-708-2658

JenFeero@gmail.com

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GREEN IDEAS



Energy efficient lighting tips

Do you want to lower your electricity bill while also doing your part to protect the planet? If so, here are four bright ideas to help make lighting your home more energy efficient.

Buy the right bulbs. It's best to favor LED bulbs, which use 70 to 90 percent less energy than incandescent ones. Also, consider the brightness of your lighting. To avoid wasting electricity, opt for bulbs with a lumen (LM) rating that suits your needs.

For example, watching TV doesn't require as bright a light as completing a puzzle.

Avoid using lights unnecessarily Turn off lights when you leave a room and put your outdoor lights on a timer so they shut off when you go to bed. You should also take steps to maximize the natural light in your home. Additionally, avoid connecting multiple fixtures to the same switch so you can control how many you turn on at once.

Dust your lights regularly. Bulbs and lampshades emit considerably more light if they aren't coated in a layer of dust. Make cleaning them part of your household chores so you don't have to turn on extra lights.

Be smart about placement. As much as possible, position lamps in the corners of rooms. This will allow their light to bounce off two walls rather than just one, thereby increasing how much each lamp brightens the space.

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