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SPRING CLEANING Goal: A CLEAN HOME!



Do you have all the spring-cleaning products and accessories you need? Check out this checklist!

Spring cleaning is the perfect opportunity to refresh your home after a long winter. Your springtime spruce-up will go smoothly if you have everything you need on hand. Use this handy checklist.



PRODUCTS

These must-have products will make cleaning a breeze:

Eco-friendly cleaners. Use biodegradable products to clean your windows, mirrors and kitchen and bathroom surfaces.

Stain remover. This product is essential for restoring the appearance of your carpets, curtains and upholstered furniture.

White vinegar, baking soda and lemon juice. If you prefer DIY solutions, these inexpensive natural products can degrease, disinfect and deodorize your space without harming the environment.

Wood-care products. Clean, protect and shine your finest wood furniture and floors.

ACCESSORIES

Don't overlook these cleaning accessories:

Microfiber cloths. Reusable and absorbent, they're perfect for cleaning all types of surfaces.

Bucket and mop. Look for an easy-spin model for faster cleaning.

Magic eraser sponge. Ideal for removing stubborn stains from hard surfaces, it'll even clean children's drawings from your walls.

Brushes. Remove stubborn stains from tile joints and hard-to-reach corners. An old toothbrush is great for tight spaces.

Squeegee. This gadget is perfect for making your windows sparkle in no time.

Rubber gloves. Protect your hands from harsh cleaning products and water.

Vacuum cleaner. Brooms have their limits. Invest in a high-performance vacuum cleaner to effectively clean every nook and cranny of your home.



How to wash windows without leaving streaks



Spring marks the end of winter—and the start of spring cleaning. Washing your windows is the ultimate way to brighten up your home. However, cleaning glass without leaving streaks can be tricky. Follow these tips to make your windows shine.

SUPPLIES

You'll need the following supplies:

- White vinegar
- Warm water
- Spray bottle
- Lint-free or microfiber cloths
- Rubber squeegee
- Newspaper

Ideally, you should wash your windows on a cloudy day to prevent the cleaning solution from drying too quickly and creating unsightly streaks.

PREPARE YOUR WINDOWS

Start by dusting the window frames and removing any dirt, such as insect debris and spider webs. To lift off stickers or adhesive residue, wet the area and scrape it off gently with a plastic scraper.

WASH THE GLASS

Make a homemade cleaning liquid by mixing a three-to-one solution of water and white vinegar in a spray bottle. Generously spray this solution onto the glass. Use a cloth or squeegee to wipe it clean. Then, remove any liquid residue with a dry cloth. If you still notice streaks, dampen a piece of crumpled newspaper and rub it on the glass to achieve a streak-free finish.

If you don't have the time or prefer not to wash your windows yourself, you can get an impeccable clean by hiring a professional window cleaning company. This will help you quickly check this task off your spring-cleaning to-do list.

Spring cleaning 101: Don't forget these tasks

Spring cleaning is a yearly tradition that breathes fresh air into your home, but certain areas are easy to overlook—or ignore. For a thorough spring cleaning, don't neglect these seven essential tasks.

Garbage cans. Even if you empty them regularly, garbage cans can quickly accumulate bacteria and unpleasant odors. Be sure to wash them out with vinegar and hot water.

Light switches. These high-touch surfaces are breeding grounds for germs. Wiping them down with a clean cloth and all-purpose cleaner can make a big difference.

Cushions. Soft, decorative accessories need attention too. If possible, machine wash or vacuum them thoroughly to remove dust and allergens.

Coffee maker. This often-used appliance can develop limescale and grime buildup. Use a mixture of vinegar and water to sanitize the inside. Rinse it thoroughly afterward.

Fans. The blades and grilles on both ceiling and standing floor fans quickly collect dust. Use a damp cloth to keep them clean.

Blinds and curtains. Machine wash your curtains and dust your blinds with a dry cloth to keep them looking fresh.

Vents. Although easy to miss, air vents trap dust and allergens. Use a vacuum cleaner or a damp cloth to keep them clean.

Cleaning these often-overlooked areas will help you create a healthier living space. Gather your cleaning supplies and take your spring cleaning to the next level.



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7 steps to clean your pantry like a pro

Cleaning out your pantry is one of those chores you only do maybe once a year. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to do it right from cleaning and organization professionals:

1. Empty the pantry completely. You may make some surprising discoveries!
2. Sort all the food by category. For example, group together spices, canned vegetables and cereals.
3. Check the expiration dates and get rid of any out-of-date products. If you can't find a date, consult a credible source, like a government website, to determine the approximate shelf life of popular food items.
4. Clean the walls and shelves inside the pantry with an all-purpose cleaner.
5. Wipe down the outside of plastic and glass containers and bottles with a damp cloth.
6. Carefully put all the items back on the shelves or in storage baskets. For instance, put the items you use most often within easy reach or place canned goods together.
7. Wipe down the outside of the pantry, including the doors and handles.

A clean, well-organized pantry will make cooking easier and minimize food waste. What are you waiting for?



Want to involve your kids in spring cleaning? Here's how!

Do you have children? Getting them used to doing chores at an early age is a great idea. It teaches them responsibility and helps prepare them to be independent adults while also giving you a helpful hand. Spring cleaning is the perfect opportunity to show them correct cleaning methods and have fun while you do it.



SAFETY

Your child's safety is most important. For younger kids, focus on safe tasks, such as sorting toys or dusting furniture. Keep harmful cleaning products out of their reach, and explain why certain items, like stepladders, aren't toys.

ATMOSPHERE

Use your creativity to turn housework into a game. Transform each task into a friendly challenge, such as, "Who can clean up the fastest?" Since children like to imitate their parents, maintain a positive attitude. Play some upbeat music and dance while you clean.

When the chores are done, reward yourselves with a trip to the movies or a family meal out. Your kids will associate spring cleaning with fun and be eager to repeat the experience next year. Clever, isn't it?

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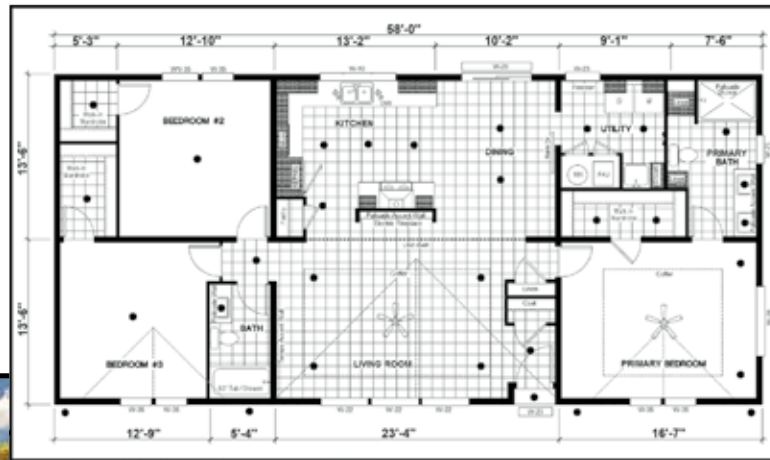
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Home and yard care 10 essential springtime tasks



The days are growing longer and warmer, coaxing you to step outside and enjoy the invigorating spring air. Warmer weather also means it's time to tackle some important chores. Here's an overview:



Inspect the roof. Check for missing shingles, popped nails, standing water, membrane damage and signs of mold. If you notice any of these signs, repairs are needed.

Prepare the soil. Fertilize and amend the soil as needed. If you haven't done this in a few years, consider getting a soil analysis to determine how to boost plant growth.

Clean the gutters. Look for cracks and remove debris that could prevent water from draining. Make sure water drains away from the foundation.

Trim vegetation. Cut back perennials you didn't get in the fall and trim any branches that are dangerously close to your house. Remove broken branches that didn't survive the winter.



Look at the attic and ceiling. Look for signs of leakage, such as rings, mold or peeling paint. Check also for nests or droppings that indicate the presence of unwanted pests.

Maintain your gardening tools. Ensure your hedge trimmer, lawnmower, edger and other tools are ready to use. Sharpen the blades, check the oil levels and clean or replace any parts as necessary.

Inspect the foundation. If you notice narrow cracks, seal them with an appropriate product. Consult an expert if the cracks are wider than a quarter of an inch.

Test your air conditioner. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on changing or cleaning your air conditioner's filters and coils. Then, turn it on, test it and fix any issues before the first heat wave hits.



Examine the windows. Check for damaged caulking and replace it if necessary. Ensure all your windows open and close smoothly and the screens are intact.

Call a maintenance professional or get started right away and make the most of this spring.

Deal with exterior taps. Turn on the water and inspect the tap for leaks. Cover the mouth of the faucet with your thumb. If everything is functioning properly, you shouldn't be able to stop the flow easily.



Inspired LIVING



Another trendy style is Japandi, a harmonious blend of Scandinavian esthetics and Japanese serenity. This style focuses on simple lines, natural materials and functional spaces, creating a calming, uncluttered environment ideal for those craving serenity.

ACCESSORIES

This year, unique tableware is a decorative element unto itself. Additionally, using mirrors in various shapes and sizes can help visually expand your space. As smart technologies become more prevalent, integrating touch screens into your decor can add a modern feel.

Sculptural light fixtures and oversized wall art are major focal points in modern decor. Biophilic design is a trend worth considering, popularizing the idea of incorporating plants into your home—think hanging pots and living walls. Lastly, textured cushions made from thick fabrics help create a warm, inviting atmosphere. The right accessories can really create that wow factor.

Interior design: top trends to watch for in 2025

Are you interested in contemporary, on-trend home decor? Check out the following 2025 interior design trends to elevate your home.

COLORS

This year's hottest colors are earthy tones and deep blues inspired by nature and travel. These shades create a serene atmosphere. Terracotta and moss green are essential colors for connecting indoor and outdoor spaces in every season.

You can incorporate these colors into your decor by painting your walls or using wallpaper. You can also integrate them

through furniture or textiles, such as curtains, cushions and rugs.

MATERIALS

Sophisticated, easy-care materials like raw wood, marble and steel are trending in stylish homes. Glass will also be considered a must-have for its elegance and versatility. Whether it's translucent, frosted or textured, glass adds a sense of openness and luminosity to your living space.

Polished concrete and natural stone are still popular with people who prefer timeless, minimalist designs. Durability

is a key consideration this year. Consequently, eco-friendly and recycled materials have become essential choices for responsible homeowners.

STYLES

The maximalist trend continues to captivate with its bold, contrasting patterns, textures and colors. At the same time, retro styles from the 70s and 80s are making a strong comeback, offering warm, vibrant interiors that appeal to those who savor nostalgia. Although minimalism is still going strong, it's gradually giving way to more eccentric and personalized styles.

How to harmonize colors throughout your home



Are you considering repainting all the rooms in your home? Whether you want to prepare your home to go on the market or simply to bring your decor up to date, thoughtful color selection is essential. Follow this guide to achieve an eye-catching look from the living room to the bathroom, bedroom and kitchen.

BASIC RULES

According to decorating experts, choosing complementary paint shades for all the rooms in your home is important to ensure balance and esthetic appeal. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

Designate a main—or dominant—color, ideally in the neutrals category. Select two or three secondary colors that complement

the main color. Determine the accent color. This should be a bolder shade that will add character to the rooms.

EXPERT SERVICES

If you're debating between several options or are worried about making a mistake, consider hiring an interior decorator. They'll consider your preferences and suggest palettes for a foolproof mix of colors.

Finally, if you're leaning towards a less classic or more specific style, like maximalist or monochromatic, be prepared to approach your color choices differently. Research the trends you're interested in for inspiration to make informed decisions.

Inspired LIVING

Furnishing a small living room: expert tips

Does your living room feel cramped? Try these expert decorating tips to make your small space both functional and esthetically pleasing:

Choose light colors. Light shades help create a sense of space by reflecting light. Colors like off-white, beige and pearl gray are perfect for creating a light atmosphere.

Pick your furniture wisely. Look for small or multi-functional pieces of furniture, such as nesting tables and storage ottomans. Avoid bulky items that take up too much space.

Decorate sparingly. Leave as much free space as possible to avoid overcrowding the space. Instead, stick to a few carefully selected pictures or accessories to add character.

Provide multiple light sources. Use subtle, indirect lighting and accent lamps to compensate for a lack of natural light, which can make the living room feel even smaller. Wall-mounted fixtures are particularly effective because they free up floor space for a more streamlined appearance.

Play with mirrors. Mirrors reflect light and create the illusion of depth. Place a mirror opposite a window to maximize natural light and create a feeling of openness.

Visit your local shops to find everything you need to create a living room you love.



“My houseplants always die!”

Natural plants can bring life to any room. Do the plants you buy tend to die within a few months—or even weeks? You might be making some common mistakes. Here’s what you need to know.

COMMON CAUSES

Most problems affecting indoor plants are caused by the following factors:

Both insufficient and excessive watering can harm your plants. Check the moisture level by gently sticking your finger into the soil about an inch deep. If the soil feels dry, it’s time to water.

Different plants have different light requirements. Some thrive in bright sunlight, while others prefer cooler, shadier spots. Make sure you know what your plants need.

Dust can collect on leaves, blocking sunlight and preventing photosynthesis. Gently clean your plant’s leaves regularly to keep them healthy.

If the pot is too small, the plant may become root-bound and struggle to grow. Periodically repot your plants to promote growth.

Ordinary potting soil may not provide enough nutrients for long-term health. Fertilizing your plants is necessary to ensure they thrive.

Always inspect new plants for pests and diseases. Keep them isolated from your other plants for a few weeks to prevent spreading.

Consult an expert at your local greenhouse or garden center for more advice on caring for your houseplants or to learn which species are most resilient.

Laminate countertops: an attractive option

Are you in the process of renovating your kitchen or bathroom and trying to choose a countertop material? Laminate could be an excellent choice. Here’s a short guide to help you familiarize yourself with this material.

MANUFACTURING

The manufacturing process for laminate is relatively straightforward. It consists of several layers of kraft paper coated with resin and then heat-cured. These layers are compressed and bonded together to create the final product.

ADVANTAGES

One of the primary advantages of laminate countertops is their affordability. They typically cost between \$7 and \$30 per square foot. They’re also versatile, as they can be cut to fit the dimensions required for your project and are available in various colors and finishes.

DISADVANTAGES

However, laminate countertops have some drawbacks. Laminate tends to wear out more quickly than other materials and is only moderately heat resistant. This means that it’s susceptible to warping and scratching. Once damaged, laminate can be difficult to repair.

Despite these shortcomings, laminate countertops remain a viable option for many projects. Visit a local specialist retailer to learn more.



What to consider when choosing kitchen cabinets

Is your kitchen outdated and in need of a makeover? The right choice of cabinets can take your space from drab to fab. Consider these factors to guide your choice.

BUDGET

What’s the most you can spend? If you’re on a tight budget, you might want to consider prefabricated cabinets, which are typically the most affordable. Custom-built cabinets can be an excellent choice for a truly individualized look. However, they come at a much higher price point.

MATERIAL

The material you choose for your cabinets will significantly affect your kitchen’s finished look and feel. Different materials vary not only in price but also in their unique characteristics:

Imitation lacquer is relatively new to the market. This material is highly resistant to scratches and water damage. Wood is

a timeless option that can add that inimitable sense of warmth to your space. Melamine is an affordable choice and comes in a wide range of colors. Acrylic is a glossy material that can give your kitchen a modern look. There are many additional materials to consider, so don’t hesitate to talk to an expert.

HANDLES

You may think handles are a trivial detail, but they can make a significant difference in the overall appearance of your cabinets. Knobs, which typically require a single screw, are generally the most affordable option.

Two-screw models, although more expensive, offer a broader variety of styles. You can also find handleless cabinet designs that are perfect for creating a minimalist look.



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FUN + FRESH RECIPES

Turkey and bacon burgers

*In the mood for a delicious treat?
These gourmet burgers are packed
with flavor and sure to please.*

Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 4 slices bacon
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 16 ounces ground turkey
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs (ideally seasoned)
- 1/3 cup parsley, coarsely chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 hamburger buns
- Condiments and toppings of your choice

Directions

1. In a large frying pan, slowly cook the bacon slices in the vegetable oil until crisp. Place on paper towels, leaving the bacon fat in the pan.
2. While the bacon is cooking, combine the ground turkey, beaten egg, onion, breadcrumbs, parsley, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Use the mixture to form 4 patties. Try to make the patties the same size as the buns.
3. Cook the patties in the bacon fat for 3 or 4 minutes on each side or until the meat is cooked through.
4. Assemble the burgers with the bacon, condiments and toppings, such as tomatoes, lettuce, onions, pickles, mayonnaise and ketchup.



Lemon and nectarine iced tea

*This refreshing iced tea is easy
to make. Enjoy it by the pool
or when having a barbecue.*

Servings: 6 to 8

Ingredients

- 34 ounces water
- 1/3 cup honey
- 2 lemons, sliced into rounds
- 2 nectarines (or peaches), cut into quarters
- 3 tea bags (ideally lemon or orange pekoe)
- Sprigs of fresh mint for garnish

Directions

1. Bring the water, honey, lemon and nectarine slices to a boil in a medium saucepan. Stir well.
2. Remove from heat and add the tea bags. Let the tea steep for 4 or 5 minutes.
3. Pour the tea into a pitcher and let it cool completely before placing it in the fridge for at least an hour.
4. Divide the fruit between several small clear glasses, add ice cubes, pour over the tea and garnish with mint.

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FUN + FRESH RECIPES



Spicy grilled halloumi cheese

Planning to host a barbecue? Try this simple and original starter before grilling the main course.

Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 1 cup + 1 tablespoon water
- 1 cup rice vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon ketchup
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, finely grated
- 1 or 2 teaspoon(s) red pepper flakes
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 16-ounce block halloumi cheese
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- A few small fresh red chillies, sliced (for garnish)

Directions

1. In a small saucepan, bring the cup of water, vinegar, sugar, ketchup, ginger, red pepper flakes and garlic to a gentle boil. Make sure all the sugar has dissolved, and then let it cool completely.

2. Slice the cheese in half lengthways. Then, cut each half in half to make four large sticks.
3. Place the cheese in a bowl and cover with the marinade. Let marinate in the fridge for a few hours or overnight.
4. Drain the cheese, making sure to keep the marinade.
5. Bring the marinade to a boil in a small saucepan. Dissolve the cornstarch in a tablespoon of water. Gradually pour into the marinade and simmer gently until the mixture thickens.
6. Thread the cheese pieces onto wooden skewers. Grill on all sides on the barbecue or in a pan on the stovetop.
7. Pour the marinade over the cheese skewers, garnish with chopped red chillis and serve warm.

Hummus without tahini

In addition to being tasty, this tahini-free hummus is perfect for people with sesame allergies.

Servings: 4 to 6

Ingredients

- 1 can chickpeas (18 ounces)
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- Juice of one lemon (2 to 3 tablespoons)
- 2/3 cup olive oil (may vary according to desired texture)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- Black olives and parsley (to garnish)

Directions

1. In a food processor or blender, puree the chickpeas, garlic and lemon juice.
2. Gradually add the olive oil until the desired texture is reached. Season with salt and pepper. Add a little water if necessary.
3. Place in the fridge for at least an hour. Just before serving, sprinkle with cumin, drizzle with olive oil and garnish with olives and parsley. Serve with raw vegetables and pita bread.



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GREEN IDEAS

BECAUSE GAS IS NO LONGER THE GO-TO...

It makes sense to switch to battery-powered or electric tools!

Are you a gardening enthusiast or an environmentally conscious homeowner? If so, you should consider using battery-powered or electric tools to maintain your outdoor spaces. This season, say goodbye to noisy gas-powered lawnmowers and power tools and explore other more nature-friendly options.

A COMPLETE RANGE OF TOOLS

You can buy alternatives to every traditional gas-powered tool for trimming hedges, weeding, pruning and maintaining flowerbeds. These tools are just as efficient as their gas-powered counterparts but without using fossil fuels.

Modern electric lawnmowers with lithium-ion batteries are incredibly efficient and provide reliable power for lawn maintenance. They can be recharged and used for hours on a single charge. By eliminating the need for gas, these mowers significantly reduce pollutant emissions and help preserve air quality.

REDUCED NOISE POLLUTION

Another environmental advantage of electric tools is that they're quiet. Gone are the deafening sounds of gas engines. Electric and battery-powered tools allow you to work in silence without disturbing those around you. It's an all-around more enjoyable experience!

Switching from gas-powered tools to electric or battery-powered ones is essential to living more sustainably. Visit your local hardware store or nursery to explore eco-friendly options.



The golden rules of ecological gardening



Do you dream of having beautiful flowerbeds, a lush lawn and a large vegetable garden overflowing with healthy foods and fragrant herbs? Here are some basic gardening rules that won't harm the environment.

Don't use pesticides. These chemical substances are used to kill harmful insects and weeds. However, they're bad for your health and that of the planet. Fortunately, there are eco-friendly alternatives, such as crushed eggshells and pyrethrin.

Use natural fertilizers. Although fertilizers are meant to help plants grow, they can pollute the water table and deplete the soil of vital nutrients. Look for natural fertilizers that will achieve the same results.

Avoid unnecessary watering. Water is a precious resource that must be used thoughtfully. Avoid watering shallowly or when the sun is bright; the water will evaporate too quickly. Instead, water close to the ground and store rainwater whenever possible. You can find containers designed for this purpose in shops selling gardening accessories.

Encourage biodiversity. Mixing plant species makes your garden more resistant to threats like pests and extreme weather conditions. To support biodiversity, ensure you include native plants essential for wildlife survival.



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