

NOVEMBER 2021 | DAILY JOURNAL

HOME TRENDS

MAGAZINE



A place
for pets

Enjoy your fur babies without
your house going to the dogs

REMODELING: Choosing the right pro // EQUIPMENT: Assembling a handy toolbox

INDIANA REALTY PROS

Oh What Fun!

Grab a cup of hot cocoa and celebrate the holidays this season in Johnson County and surrounding areas!

Santa Train Downtown Bargersville	December 3	3:15 - 6:30 pm
2021 Holiday Lighting and Winter Market in Downtown Franklin	December 4	9 am
Christmas at the Farm at Little Red Barn Market (Martinsville)	December 4	9 am - 3 pm
Chocolate Extravaganza at The Sycamore at Mallow Run	December 4	10 am - 2 pm
Breakfast with the Grinch 2021 at The Silver Centre Event Hall	December 4	9 am - 12 pm
2021 Holiday Craft & Gift Show at Greenwood Community High School	December 5	9 am - 2 pm
Christmas Concert at Franklin Active Adult Center	December 9	
Doughnuts with Santa at Johnson County Shrine Club Franklin	December 11	10 am - 1 pm
2021 Breakfast with Santa at Greenwood Community Center	December 11	2 pm
Greenwood Holiday Market Extravaganza at Greenwood Park Mall	December 11	11 am - 10 pm
Night Owl Christmas Concert at Pixy Theater	December 11	7 - 9 pm
Old Fashioned Christmas Celebration at Franklin Township Historical Society	December 12	6 - 7:30 pm
Santa's Workshop The Children's Museum of Indianapolis	December 12	2 - 3 pm
kidscommons Polar Express at Columbus' Community Children's Museum	December 12	3 - 5 pm
Cereal Cinema: The Muppet Christmas Carol at the Historic Athenaeum	December 18	9:30 am - 12 pm
Holiday Gnomes at Johnson County Fairgrounds	December 18	3 - 4 pm
Tree Trio at Johnson County Fairgrounds	December 18	12:30 pm - 1:15 pm
Countdown to Noon at the Children's Museum	December 31	10 am - 3 pm





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Ron Rose
 Owner - Broker

If your home is currently listed for sale, this is not a solicitation of your listing.



FOUR-LEGGED HOUSEMATES

Follow these tips to make your home pet-friendly and pleasant for everyone.

PAGES 8-12

WHAT'S INSIDE

SAFETY

PAGE 5



ELIMINATE HAZARDS

Upgrade lighting, flooring for safety in the bathroom

REMODELING

PAGE 14



CHOOSING THE BEST

How to hire the perfect person for your remodel

MAINTENANCE

PAGE 16



A TOOL FOR EVERY JOB

Every homeowner should have a basic set of tools.

HOME TRENDS

MAGAZINE

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YOUR SAFE SPACE

Eliminate hazards in the bathroom with better flooring, lighting

BY MENARDS | PHOTO BY ADOBE STOCK

Known as one of the most hazardous rooms in your home, your bathroom should be a comfortable and safe space. Having a well-designed, stylish, accessible and functional bathroom is all possible while keeping safety in mind.

ELIMINATE HAZARDS

Surfaces: Flooring choice is a main component in bathroom safety. Non-slip, smooth and free of debris flooring can prevent falls and other injuries. Remove loose rugs to prevent trip ups and install flooring that enables traction. Cleared table tops can act as a stabilizer to move from one area to the next.

Moisture: Bathrooms tend to be moisture ridden, therefore wiping up spills, puddles and excess water around the shower, sink and toilet could prevent an injury.

Lighting: Proper lighting is important for visibility of the space.

Inadequate lighting is a main contributor to accidents; therefore, installing automatic night lights and replacing burnt out bulbs can save you from a potential fall.

FUNCTIONALITY

Support: Installing appropriate objects designed to support someone's weight, such as grab bars, will help maintain balance and give ease of mind when stepping in or out of wet areas prone to slipping.

Space: Allowing enough turn-around space between bathroom utilities aids bathroom safety. Catching on corners of walls, vanities and toilets can contribute to accidents.

Access: Designing a bathroom for easy access to the shower, tub, sink, toilet, etc. can help prevent injuries. Walk-in showers and cut-out bath tubs are perfect examples of safe guarding your health and planning ahead.

CODE

Installation: Keep bathroom safety at the forefront of your plans by hiring a licensed contractor to ensure your bathroom follows state codes and regulations.

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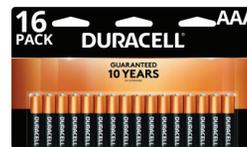
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UNWANTED GUESTS

Invite loved ones, not bugs, into your home this holiday

BY STATEPOINT | PHOTO BY ADOBESTOCK

While you may primarily associate insect invasions with warmer weather, bugs are liable to make themselves at home in your living spaces during all four seasons.

In fact, it is actually common to see an uptick in spider activity in your home during the colder months around their mating season. What's more, most bugs are far more resilient than you may realize, and can survive on little food and under strange conditions. (A cockroach can live for an entire week without its head!)

To make your holiday guests' stay more pleasant, banish these unwanted visitors by taking the following steps:

CLEAN UP

The holiday season means more meats, crumbly sweets and sugary treats around the house. But most bugs don't need much food to survive. In fact, a cockroach can survive for months on a single crumb of food. After cooking and baking, be sure to wipe down surfaces and sweep up crumbs thoroughly. You should also shake out carpets and vacuum rugs in your dining room or anywhere crumbly cookies and cakes are enjoyed.

DEFEND ENTRY POINTS

Did you know that many of the steps you can take to improve energy efficiency in cool weather have the added benefit of helping

to keep bugs out of your home? Keep entry points of your home sealed, such as the garage door, and caulk small cracks in your home's foundation and siding. These measures will go a long way toward regulating the temperature in your home, and also toward preventing insect infestation.

BANISH BUGS WITHOUT HESITATION

While many traditional bug sprays direct you to clear the room during and after use, there are effective alternatives that allow you to spray and stay that won't disrupt your holiday festivities. Zevo, for example, uses bioselective technology, made of essential oils, targets and shuts down biological pathways found in bugs.

MIND FIREWOOD

Everyone loves a roaring fire during the holidays. However, bugs can commonly make their way into your home via firewood. Store firewood outdoors under a tarp to keep it dry (moist firewood attracts bugs) and don't bring it inside until you plan to burn it.

While the holiday season is all about welcoming guests, you don't need to extend that invitation to pests. Make your home more inviting to your friends and family by taking steps to keep bugs at bay.



ROOM FOR ALL

Pets add joy to our lives, but can trash our homes.
Learn how to keep the house nice for all.

BY JENN WILLHITE | PHOTOS BY ADOBE STOCK



Introducing a new pet into a household can be a wonderful adventure, however, area experts say learning to live with a new canine or feline friend can sometimes present challenges that are easily avoidable as long as you do your homework and exercise patience.

Anne Sutton, executive director of the Humane Society of Johnson County, says she and her staff have seen about “every breed, make, model and mix you can think of” and adds it is for that reason they try to match people with the right personality animal.

One of the first questions potential pet parents are asked when filling out an application to adopt is, ‘What are you looking for in an animal to fit your lifestyle?’ So, are you always active? Or do you prefer a more sedentary lifestyle?

Essentially, your activity level and lifestyle are the best determin-

ing factors for what animal and breed best suits you.

“Down the line, if it is a puppy or an adult dog, those attributes that are in them will exacerbate as they get more comfortable with you,” Sutton says. “We don’t want you to call us a year from now and say, ‘This isn’t working anymore.’”

Generally speaking, pets are usually surrendered in the face of major life changes, Sutton says. Among the top reasons for relinquishing a pet are moving, divorce or there is a new baby in the house, she adds.

When introducing a new animal into the house, Sutton recommends using the “Three, Three, Three Rule.”

It takes an animal about three days to decompress and shake off overwhelm after being introduced to new surroundings, Sutton says. It is usually three weeks or so before an animal begins to learn the household’s routine and becomes more comfortable and at home. And, by three months, the animal should feel completely comfortable and settled in.

However, people don’t always have the time to allow the animal to acclimate on its own terms and want it to be comfortable and settled in immediately and, unfortunately, when an animal doesn’t adjust according to the human’s schedule, it can sometimes result in a return to shelter.

“We are such an instant gratification society we want it right now,” Sutton says. “Don’t look at adopting in the same fashion. It is, God willing, a 15- to 20-year commitment. So what are your goals five years from now? Of course, things come up and life changes, but certainly we hope at that point you fit your animal into those changes.”

Introducing puppies and dogs is one thing, but introducing a cat into a household requires a completely different approach and a bit of patience.

There are generally two ways to introduce a feline to its new home: scent swapping (such as allowing a cat to sniff scents from other animals in the house via a toy or pillow, for instance) and slow introductions, says Regan Lambert, director of Johnson County Community Cats.

“In both processes, the cat starts off in a room they can keep the cat confined in with its food, water, litter box and everything it is going to need,” Lambert says. “And we just have them keep the cat in that room for a few days, but sometimes a cat needs more time. It is to help a cat decompress and get over the stress of moving while associating that ‘My litter box, my food and everything I need is here.’”

If you’ve more than one cat, you will likely need more than one litter box, but it is possible to have too many, Lambert cautions.

“A lot of people say a litter box per cat plus one,” Lambert says. “But it is dependent on the size of the litter box, where it is placed and how often it is cleaned.”

If you have a two-story home, having a litter box on each floor so that cat knows it has a box within easy distance can help curb the chance for messes or acting out.

“Placement is just wherever is easiest for the cat to access and maybe a little out of the way so you can’t see it or the dog can’t get to it because they like to do that,” Lambert adds.

To cut down on dust and ubiquitous litter spreading, avoid lightweight litters, Lambert says. Also, placing a litter-catching mat where the cat steps in and out of the box will help capture some of the excess.



Now, accidents do happen and, sometimes, it isn't behavioral. Cats are much more sensitive to change than what many people give them credit for, Lambert says.

Getting out cat urine from any soft surface can be a chore. Lambert recommends using a cleaner that breaks down the enzymes of the urine, such as vinegar.

"If your cat is peeing on things, you may assume it is a behavioral issue, but you have to rule out medical issues," Lambert says. "It isn't always just that the cat is mad, it could be a medical issue like a UTI or they're stressed out due to changes in the environment."

Cat climbing or scratching where it shouldn't? Double sided tape works wonders for deterring these behaviors. Lambert recommends shunning the old school spray bottle for double-sided tape that can be placed in the areas in question. Once a cat's

paws touch the sticky tape, they lose interest in the original mission because they don't like how the tape feels on their paws.

Supplement with scratching posts, towers and toys, Lambert recommends, and you can even sweeten the deal with a little catnip or catnip spray.

"If there are areas in the house they scratch, place a scratching post there and then redirect and praise them for scratching the correct thing," Lambert says.

When it comes to keeping your floors in tip-top shape, installing durable flooring can be a great benefit.

Franklin's Dale Hughes, owner of Dale Hughes Interior Design Inc., says most people are going to use friendly flooring with a hard surface. Luxury floors can take the abuse, traffic and just about anything else you can throw at it, including muddy, rambunctious paws, Hughes says.

"It helps with cleaning because it is more environmentally pleasing because you don't have the carpet germs and dirt gets into carpet that you can't get out," Hughes says. "A lot of people have allergies and so the less carpet you have and the cleaner you can keep your flooring, the better those with allergies will feel."

Tony Burton, co-owner of Burton's Flooring Center in Franklin, says waterproof luxury vinyl and tile are the most popular flooring option.

It may cost more upfront, but vinyl flooring won't swell from continued messes and cleans easily and quickly, Burton says.

"There is a bit of an increase for those features," Burton says. "Most people have pets and they see a value in it. It can handle a bit more abuse. You should get another five or six years out of that product easily."



PAMPER YOUR PETS

Ways to keep your furry friend happy and healthy

BY MENARDS | PHOTO BY ADOBE STOCK

Everyone loves to be pampered and your pet is no different! It can be easy to forget that our lovable, furry friends need a little extra attention sometimes. Here are some simple things you can do from time to time.

HOMEMADE TREATS

A homemade treat is the perfect way to not only show your pet that you care about them, but also to monitor what type of food you're giving them. Your cat is sure to love homemade salmon or tuna snacks while your dog will adore peanut butter recipes.

TRYING NEW THINGS

Just like you, your pet can become bored with their daily routine. Taking your pet on your vacation is a great way to expose them to new experiences. Dogs especially love anything that involves exercise, so

camping or hiking trips may be perfect for them. Cats can be trained to walk on a leash, but may enjoy vacations that involve less rigorous outside time.

DOGGIE DAYCARE

If you have a full-time job, it can be hard to spend enough time with your pup during the day. Paying for your dog to spend time with caretakers offers enormous benefits for your pup! Not only do they get the chance for playtime with others dogs, but they also get exercise and human contact. Arranging a pet sitter or a dog walker is another great option.

PET PLAY SPACE

Designate a specific place for your pet to play and relax that won't be disrupted by anyone or anything else in the household. For dogs, place a couple of pet beds on the perimeter of the space and then set up interactive toys in the middle. Cats, on the other hand, will meow for joy if you splurge on an extra special cat tree for them, loading it with treats and toys.

DIY PET MASSAGE

Giving your pet a massage is another way to relax and pamper your pet. Not

only can it feel good, but it may also have health benefits if done correctly. Do some research on this one.

CELEBRATE "GOTCHA" DAY

"Gotcha" Day refers to the day that you adopted your furry friend. Many people, especially if they are uncertain of their pet's exact birthday, like to celebrate on this day. Make a pet-friendly cake, have treats, invite friends and family and maybe their pets, too.

BACKYARD HAVENS

Your pet may have the perfect setup indoors, but both dogs and cats may appreciate a space outdoors that is tailored perfectly for them. It can be as simple as a doghouse or an area enclosed by a pet fence maybe above and beyond by creating a special playground.

ONE-ON-ONE TIME

There is an endless amount of activities you can do with your pet, but the best part about all of them is the time you spend together. Whether on an outdoor adventure or snuggling up on the couch to watch a movie, what your pet really loves is your time and attention.



BACKYARD HAVEN

Make sure your yard is a safe place for your pets to play

BY FAMILY FEATURES | PHOTO BY UNSPLASH

If you have pets that enjoy spending time outdoors, it's important to make sure your yard is a safe place for them to be.

Consider these hazards that can negatively impact the well-being of your furry friends.

POISONOUS PLANTS

Some common plants can be dangerous for animals, causing anything from mild oral irritations and upset stomachs to cardiovascular damage and even death. For example, these are some of the toxic plants the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) has identified as harmful for either cats or dogs:

- Aloe can cause vomiting, diarrhea, tremors, anorexia and depression
- Azalea can cause vomiting, diarrhea, hypersalivation, weakness, coma, cardiovascular collapse and death
- Burning bush can cause vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain and weakness, as well as heart rhythm abnormalities with

large doses

- Caladium can cause burning and irritation of the mouth, tongue and lips, excessive drooling, vomiting and difficulty swallowing
- Daylilies can cause kidney failure in cats
- Hibiscus can cause vomiting, diarrhea, nausea and anorexia

MULCH AND COMPOST

The decomposing elements that make compost good can be bad for pets, according to the National Garden Society. Keep compost in a secure container or fenced off area so pets can't get to it. Cocoa mulch can be a particular problem for dogs. A byproduct of chocolate production, cocoa mulch can cause digestive problems and even seizures in dogs. Shredded pine or cedar mulch is a safer choice.

FERTILIZER, INSECTICIDES

The chemicals used to get rid of pests or make your lawn lush can be toxic to pets.

Some of the most dangerous pesticides include snail bait with metaldehyde, fly bait with methomyl, systemic insecticides with disyston or disulfoton, mole or gopher bait with zinc phosphide and most forms of rat poison, according to the ASPCA. Follow all instructions carefully, and store pesticides and fertilizers in a secure area out of the reach of animals.

FLEAS AND TICKS

In addition to using appropriate flea and tick prevention methods such as collars and sprays, make sure your yard isn't a welcoming environment for these pests. Keep the lawn trimmed and remove brush and detritus, where fleas and ticks often lurk. Fleas can cause hair loss, scabs, excessive scratching, tapeworms and anemia. Ticks can do all of that, plus bring you and your family in contact with diseases like Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Lyme disease.

Find more tips for keeping pets safe in your yard at eLivingtoday.com.

SHORT DAYS, COLD NIGHTS

Five ways to prepare your home for winter

BY STATEPOINT | PHOTO BY ADOBE STOCK

It's that time of year: pumpkin spice is here and so are shorter days and cooler nights. Before nightfall comes too early, take advantage of the milder temps to prepare your home for winter. Here are a few easy, DIY tasks to check off your list.

1. Close up the patio

It's important to protect patio items from winter wear and tear so you can enjoy them as soon as the weather breaks in the spring.

When the weather in your area seems to be changing for good, clean outdoor furniture like tables, chairs and décor and protect them with a heavy-duty cover. If you don't have interior storage, secure everything tightly so you don't risk items tipping during a gusty winter storm. Clean the grill, remove and store the tank, and winterize outdoor hoses and faucets. Easy-to-install faucet covers can help prevent water damage and freezing pipes.

Also, don't forget to plant your bulbs now so you'll have flowers to welcome you when the warm weather hits.

2. Secure shingles, gutters

Assess your roof and gutters to ensure

your home is safe from water damage and leaks this winter. If you suspect or discover a problem, even a small one, don't wait to fix it. It will be even more difficult to repair after the roof has become snowy and icy.

If it's not within budget, try a DIY fix with supplies you likely already have in your toolbox. The Original Duck Tape is a classic tool for temporary repairs and is great for holding, seaming and sealing coverings over problematic areas until you can later fix the issue at hand.

3. Prep A/C units

Don't overlook keeping your A/C unit clean. Most modern units are created to withstand extreme elements; however, keeping it free of buildup is key to maintaining it over time.

When it's not in use over winter, clean the surfaces on and around the unit to keep it free from buildup of dander, leaves, acorns and pine needles. Next, using an air conditioner cover, securely protect your A/C unit from snow and ice, so that it's still in its best working condition when you uncover it in the spring.

4. Keep cold weather out

Frigid temperatures draw attention to drafts coming into your home. While turning up the furnace helps, the constant escape of warm air leads to high heating costs.

Seal cracks and gaps around windows and doors wisely. Many seals tend to freeze and crack, never really fixing the problem. However, heavy-duty weatherstrip seals are made with a durable, flexible material, creating a barrier against cold air throughout the winter. When spring arrives, the strip will also work against dust, pollen and insects.

5. Clean windows

Prepare your home for short gloomy days and long nights by giving windows and blinds a deep clean. When these surfaces are clean, natural light can pour in during the day, helping combat winter blues.





7 Tips for selecting your home remodeler

BY FAMILY FEATURES | PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES



When planning a potential home remodeling project, the list of decisions to make may feel nearly endless. Ultimately, you may find the most important decision is choosing a trustworthy team of professionals to complete the job. For example, an organization like the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) provides homeowners with helpful ways to find qualified, professional remodelers and contractors.

These seven tips can help guide you through the selection process and assist you in making an informed decision that best suits your needs.

1. LOOK LOCAL

Local remodelers have a vested interest to perform quality work that satisfies their customers in order for their business to survive. That's why word-of-mouth referrals can be especially helpful in finding options near you. Ask relatives, friends, neighbors and business colleagues who live nearby about projects they've completed and the professionals they've used. Other resources may include people you know in the local home industry, such as lenders, real estate agents and material suppliers.

2. FOLLOW BUILDING CODES

Another advantage to hiring a local professional is he or she typically knows and understands the local building codes and permit requirements for your town or city. Building codes can vary considerably from each jurisdiction and are known to change from year to year. Most structural work or footprint expansions require permits.

3. CHECK FOR LICENSES AND INSURANCE

Many states, but not all, require contractors to be licensed, bonded and insured. Contact your state or local licensing agencies to ensure the contractor you're considering meets all requirements. Most states require a contractor to carry worker's compensation, property damage and personal liability insurance. Ask for copies of their licenses and insurance to make sure it is current.

4. CHECK FOR VIOLATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

Check with your Consumer Affairs Office and your local chapter of the Better Business Bureau to ensure there are no complaints on record for the contractors you're considering. You can also search for reviews online and verify they are members of reputable trade organizations that promote professional excellence, such as NARI.

5. COMPARE APPLES WITH APPLES

If you solicit estimates from more than one contractor, be sure they are working off the same scope and quality of work. Discuss variations in prices and beware of any estimate that is substantially lower than the others.

6. BE INFORMED

A good remodeling professional educates clients on green remodeling, universal design, lead safety, new products, building techniques and trends. Make sure you're hiring someone who has knowledge and expertise relevant to the remodeling industry, as well as the appropriate certifications and experience to complete the job.

7. CHECK REFERENCES

Don't rely on a contractor's personality or demeanor. If a professional does not offer references, ask for them and follow up with a site visit or phone call.

Find a qualified and reputable remodeler in your area at RemodelingDoneRight.com.



The right tool for the job

BY MENARDS | PHOTO BY ADOBE STOCK

Every home should have a basic toolbox with necessary items to get a small project done. You probably have a hammer, or maybe a few other tools, or some people might have garage full of everything imaginable and become your best friend. Some of the tools listed below are perfect for basic household projects and repairs. It might be time to take inventory.

- **Philips screwdriver:** An “x-shape” can cover a wide range of screw types and sizes.
- **Flathead screwdriver:** A “straight” shape in a small, medium or large size is invaluable and can be used on most light switch plates and other projects.
- **Tape measure:** Helps estimate material quantities, figure out placement of objects, calculate floor plans and space for furniture.
- **Level:** Takes the guesswork out of eyeballing a picture frame.
- **Utility knife:** Use to remove paint around windows and cut drywall, carpet and boxes.
- **Hammer:** Pound or pull nails, crowbar action and tapping things into place.
- **Putty knife:** Ideal for scraping glue and paint or spreading putty, paste or spackle.
- **Nail set:** Sink nail heads below the surface of the wood prior to filling and sanding.
- **Combination square:** Great for scribing 45 or 90 degree angles, also a straight edge.
- **Pliers:** Jaws hold objects firmly plus used for pulling, pinching or bending materials.
- **Crescent wrench:** Sturdier version of adjustable pliers, small or very large sizes.
- **Wire stripper:** Has a blade for cutting wire or removing plastic wire coatings.
- **Allen wrenches:** Used to tighten hexagon screws on assembled furniture or bicycles.
- **Cordless or power drill:** Using drill bits to create holes or turn screws.
- **Electrical cord:** Use with electrical-powered yard or power tools, available in many sizes.
- **C-clamp:** Hold pieces of wood, metal or plastic together prior to gluing or sawing.
- **Flashlight:** Good for power outages or making repairs in dark, cramped spaces.
- **Step-stool or ladder:** When painting, changing lights, cleaning or working on fixtures.
- **Broom and dust pan:** Easy clean-up when projects get messy.

Proper storage of all your tools is also important so you can care for them and easily find them when needed. A tool box, storage cabinet or peg board with hooks are common options.



YOUR PERFECT SPACE

Consider these eye-catching ideas to update your home

BY FAMILY FEATURES | PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES

Your home is a reflection of you, and your decor should match your tastes. With some simple home upgrades, you can create the perfect space for you and your family.

“When we’re designing our ideal home, too often we may only think about what we want others to see and enjoy when they visit,” said Jack Goldman, president and CEO of the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association. “The reality is visitors account for less than 1% of your in-home time.”

Add a fresh coat of paint

One of the easiest home improvement projects, a fresh coat of paint can change the entire look of a room. Whether you choose to paint the entire space one new color, opt for an accent wall in a vibrant shade or simply freshen up the trim, paint can go a long way toward adding visual appeal and reflecting your personality. Patterned wallpaper, board and batten, stone and tile can also be added to create textured accents.

Bring ambiance with a fireplace

“A fireplace is for you and your family, a personal addition that serves you and your

household in more ways than you may realize,” Goldman said.

More than 3 in 5 homeowners have a fireplace or other hearth product in their homes, according to the HPBA, and including a fireplace in your construction or renovation plans is a gift of warmth, comfort and ambiance you can give yourself. Whether it’s a centerpiece for your living room or family room, or an accent to your bedroom, bathroom or study, a fireplace can provide an artful design element for your home and a safe, reliable heat source in the event of unexpected weather.

Update lighting fixtures

Proper lighting can bring rooms to life and make spaces look larger and more welcoming. You can brighten up your home in a variety of ways, from strategically placing table and floor lamps that fit your design style to replacing older ceiling and wall-mounted fixtures with more modern styles.

Give cabinetry a fresh look

There are numerous easy ways to update your kitchen and bathroom cabinets to create

a more updated look. One of the easiest is swapping out older cabinet pulls and knobs for more modern options. With a variety of finishes — stainless, bronze, brushed nickel, black, copper and more — and styles available, you can match your cabinets to nearly any design style in a matter of minutes. Adding a coat of stain or paint is also a relatively quick and easy way to update some of the most-used spaces in your home without completely replacing the cabinets.

Upcycle furniture

Breathe new life into your current furniture by making simple changes. The easiest would be simply rearranging your pieces and moving some to different rooms to create an updated look. You can also add decorative covers to sofas, chairs, throw pillows and more, or take your upcycling a step further and refinish a bookshelf, table or other wooden furniture with a fresh coat of paint or stain, or give it a more weathered look with some sandpaper.

Find more ideas at HPBA.org/house-warming.



AIR IT OUT

Tips to improve ventilation in your home

BY MENARDS | PHOTO BY ADOBE STOCK

Proper ventilation is one of the home's basic necessities for becoming a comfortable living space. Ventilation maintains air quality in the home while removing excess moisture to ensure the air inside isn't stale, damp or downright funky.

OPEN DOORS & WINDOWS

This might seem like a no-brainer to some, but a lot of people forget to regularly open doors or windows to let fresh air in and push stale air out. Simply opening doors and windows a few times during the day to "air out" your house quickly replaces stale indoor air with fresh outdoor air, getting rid of pollutants, allergens and excess moisture.

DRY THE LAUNDRY OUTSIDE

Drying wet clothes inside our homes creates condensation and causes your heating system to work overtime. It also accelerates condensation and mold growth in winter. To solve this problem, it's always better to dry your clothes in a covered outdoor area, such as under a patio cover or canopy, so your clothes can dry while staying out of range of rain. If drying laundry inside is the only option you have, make sure your windows are open to allow the excess moisture to escape.

VENTILATE ROOMS OVERNIGHT

Leaving windows slightly ajar overnight can improve the air quality inside your room, while also reducing excess moisture and the risk of mold growth. In summer this really helps with reducing the humidity levels so you can get a better sleep, but in winter you should be more careful about ventilating particularly because you don't want too much heat to escape in the process.

INSTALL FANS AND VENTS

Extractor fans and attic vents are both specialized ventilation systems that service certain areas in the home. Extractor fans that vent out into the open air should be installed in kitchens, laundries and bathrooms — these are the key areas where moisture and stale air build up much faster. Attic vents drive out the excess heat and moisture that become trapped in the attic, aiding your home's ventilation in the process.

CONSIDER HOME VENTILATION SYSTEM

A well-designed and well-installed home ventilation system provides great ventilation regardless of what the weather is like outside, which is a great alternative to simply opening doors and windows. If you don't have one already, a home ventilation system can replace stale air in your home with fresh, dry air to create a healthier, drier and warmer living environment for your family that is much easier to heat.

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