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JANUARY 2020



THE MORNING JOURNAL



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The image features a large, bright interior space with a high, vaulted ceiling. In the foreground, a kitchen island with a white marble countertop and white cabinetry is the focal point. It is equipped with a stainless steel gas cooktop and a double oven. A person in a white shirt and blue jeans is walking past the island, carrying a stack of wooden plates. On the countertop, there are various items including a stack of wooden plates, a small wooden tray with a cup and saucer, and a bowl of fresh green vegetables. In the background, a living area is visible through an open-plan layout. It includes a light-colored sofa with patterned cushions, a wooden coffee table, and a fireplace with a dark surround. Large windows and glass doors with white frames and light-colored curtains allow natural light to fill the room. The overall aesthetic is clean, bright, and modern with a farmhouse touch.

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## 5 Tips to Refresh Your Home in the New Year

(Family Features) Each new year gives you the chance to reset and start new routines. When you're considering new approaches to healthy living - whether eliminating or adding habits to improve your daily life - beginning with your home is an optimal choice.

Your living environment has a strong influence on your life, and it's worth evaluating how you can make updates that create a positive space for you and all that the new year will bring. Consider these ideas to refresh your home and simplify your housecleaning routine so you can spend more time focusing on your goals this year.

### Start by Decluttering

It's practically impossible to get excited about a fresh start when you're surrounded by last year's junk. Make decluttering and purging unnecessary items a top priority for your refresh. Clear counters and tables to create more inviting surfaces and force yourself to assess which items are worth keeping. Get rid of items you don't need by donating, selling or disposing them. Tackle piles of things you've carelessly tossed aside and find (or create) purposeful places for them

to belong.

### Simplify Your Laundry Routine

Whether it's the frustration of having no clean laundry or never-ending baskets filled with clothes that need folding, laundry is an area where nearly every home can use a refresh. Start with the basics to make laundry easy and quick. A streamlined laundry system starts with the right tools for the job, such as all Mighty Pacs, which are available in several varieties with different benefits and contain single doses of detergent that release while inside your machine, so you can simply toss one in and start the load. If you have sensitive skin, try all Free Clear, the No. 1 recommended detergent brand by dermatologists, allergists and pediatricians for sensitive skin. It's gentle and works through tough stains fast.

### Create a Fitness Space

One way to stay committed to a new workout regimen is to create a place where you enjoy spending time. Even if you don't have a room to dedicate to fitness, you can make a fitness corner feel more intentional and less like an afterthought with some simple changes.



If possible, locate your fitness area near a window so you can soak up the energy of natural light. Clear away unnecessary items and make room for the equipment or floor space you need. Add inspiring posters or make frames to hold your current workout guide. Add storage for hand weights, resistance bands and other small equipment to create your own home gym.

### Reconfigure Your Furniture

A full-fledged renovation may not be in the cards (or budget), but you can give your living space a quick facelift by simply rearranging the furniture. Beyond simple aesthetic changes, think about how you can make better use of natural light and improve traffic patterns. You might

also eliminate extra pieces if the space feels overcrowded or consider borrowing functional items that add storage or seating from other rooms in the house.

### Add Greenery

The middle of winter may not seem like an ideal time to hone your green thumb, but adding a few plants can make your home feel more inviting and chase away the cold weather blues. Plants can also help serve as a natural air purifying system; they absorb carbon dioxide to help stimulate their growth and are believed to absorb a host of other airborne pollutants.

*For more ideas to simplify your routine this year, visit [all-laundry.com](http://all-laundry.com).*

### Did you know?

When planning spring landscapes, homeowners should always group plants with similar water needs together. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, grouping plants with similar water needs together helps to conserve water, which can be an especially useful strategy if or when drought restrictions go into effect in summer. Homeowners also can embrace additional strategies to landscape with water conservation in mind. For example, aerating soil helps to improve water flow to plants' roots and reduces water runoff, helping to ensure that plants get all of the water they need while reducing the likelihood that homeowners will have to use excessive amounts of water to keep plants healthy. In addition, using low-water-using types of grass can help homeowners who live in areas prone to drought conserve water while still maintaining lush, green lawns.





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## Signs your tools may need some TLC

A do-it-yourselfer is only as good as his or her tools. Without the proper tools, even the handiest men and women may struggle to complete jobs well within their abilities.

It doesn't take a seasoned do-it-yourselfer to recognize when hammers and screwdrivers need to be replaced. And such tools are generally so affordable that replacing them, even when they still have some utility, won't affect too many DIYers' budgets. However, power tools are considerable investments that do not necessarily need to be discarded when the first signs of trouble pop up. In fact, sometimes power tools just need some TLC to become useful once again. The following are some common symptoms of power tool problems, and what may be behind those problems.

### Difficulty starting

A power tool that won't start can delay a project. But a tool that won't start should not be immediately written off,

especially not before DIYers employ a multimeter. The cost of digital multimeters varies widely, with some retailing for less than \$20 while others sell for hundreds and hundreds of dollars. Serious DIYers who spend every weekend working on one project or another may find the more expensive multimeters more to their liking, but many weekend warriors can get by with less expensive alternatives. Multimeters are useful because they can measure voltage on a power tool to determine if power is effectively moving through the tool.

Dust and dirt also can compromise power tools. This may be especially likely in spring, a time synonymous with home renovations, when many homeowners pick up their tools for the first time in months. Inspect a power tool that's not starting to see if dust or dirt is the culprit. If so, clean the tool and then try to start it again.

### Loss of power

Some power tools may start but still lack the extra muscle that make power tools more beneficial than manual

tools. In such instances, the carbon brushes might need to be replaced. The online resource [ereplacementparts.com](http://ereplacementparts.com) notes that heat damage to brushes can reduce the overall conductivity of the brush, resulting in less power reaching the tool's motor. In such instances, replace the carbon brushes. In addition, chipped or damaged brushes can result in inconsistent power output. Replacing the brushes in such instances may be all that's necessary to restore a tool to its powerful self.

### Burning smell

Many a DIYer has dealt with a power tool that emits an odor of burning. The power tool experts at Grainger notes that tools like sanders contain drive belts, and these belts should be the first place to look when tools produce a burning smell. When the drive belt is to blame, the tool will typically stop working even when the motor is running. Capacitors may be behind the burning smell when using tools without drive belts. Sometimes tools have simply overheated. When-



ever DIYers get a whiff of that burning smell, turn off the tool immediately and let it sit for 30 minutes before trying to diagnose the problem. Replacing these parts can restore them to full usefulness and get rid of that unwelcome aroma.

Replacing worn or damaged power tool parts as opposed to the tools themselves is often the most budget-friendly way to get these must-have DIY accessories back on track.



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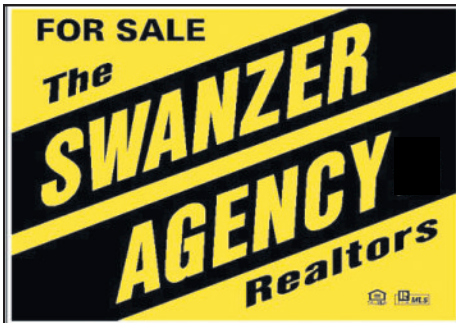


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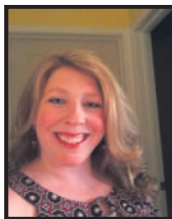
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