

How-To

June 2018 | A Special Supplement to
The Oneida Dispatch

R&R

How to create more
time for leisure
time

**Getting Back to
the Great Outdoors**

How to enjoy more time outdoors

Frugal Fun *How to travel on a budget and still have fun*

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To Subscribe

Newstand: Tues. & Thurs. \$1.00 Sunday \$2.50

Home Delivery: \$4.50/Week

How-To



Enjoy more time outdoors with easy tricks



How to create more time for leisure time



How to travel on a budget and still have fun

Did you know?

Though many people lament their lack of leisure time, the 2016 American Time Use Survey from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found that nearly everyone age 15 and over engaged in some form of leisure activity every day. Men spent an average of 5.5 hours each day engaging in leisure activities, while women spent 4.8 hours. Watching television dominated most people's leisure time, as the average person



age 15 and over spent 2.7 hours per day watching television. The survey found that the amount of time people spent watching television varied by age. Some may be surprised to learn that those ages 65 and over, who averaged more than four hours of television viewing per day, watched more television on average than any other demographic. At two hours per day, people between the ages of 15 and 44 spent the least amount of time watching television. The second most common leisure activity was socializing and communicating with friends. However, the average person spent just 39 minutes per day socializing and communicating with friends.

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How to create more time for leisure time

Few working professionals would likely say they could not use more leisure time. People spend their leisure time in various ways, and many would prefer more time to pursue their passions away from the workplace. While they may not be able to create more time in the day, men and women can take various steps to create more time for leisure.

Spend free time more wisely. According to the 2015 American Time Use Survey from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, persons age 15 and over averaged four hours and 59 minutes of leisure time per day. That figure may come as a surprise to working professionals who feel they never have enough time to pursue their passions. But such people may just be spending their leisure time in ways that don't incorporate their passions. For instance, the American Time Use Survey found that more than half of the nearly five hours of leisure time persons 15 and over enjoyed each day was spent watching television. Men and women who want to make the most of their free time can note the amount of time they spend watching television, ultimately skipping their binge watching sessions in favor of pursuing their passions.

Consider downsizing. Empty nesters, working professionals with no children or even parents whose kids still live at home may benefit by downsizing their homes. The American Time Use Survey found that men spend an average of 22 minutes per day doing housework, while women spend 50 minutes per day doing housework. Downsizing to smaller homes that don't require as much daily maintenance can provide men and women with more leisure time.



Finding ways to spend less time in the kitchen can free up leisure time for people who do not have a passion for cooking.

Get out of the kitchen. Cooking is a favorite leisure activity for many people. But for those who prefer to be out and about rather than preparing meals in the kitchen, cooking can be more of a time-consuming chore than a rewarding passion. The American Time Use Survey found that men spend 43 minutes per day on food preparation and cleanup, while women spend 70 minutes per day on such activities. Meal delivery services can cut down on the time it takes to prepare meals, opening up more leisure time for people who want to spend less time in the kitchen each day.

Make an effort to split chores down the middle. As evidenced by the time men and women spend on housework and cooking, the American Time Use Survey found that household chores are not always divided equitably among men and women. Adults who feel they do not have enough leisure time in their day can work with their spouses or significant others to ensure both partners are doing an equal amount of work around the house. Leisure time that's spent well can contribute to a higher quality of life. Many people may be surprised to learn just how much leisure time they can enjoy each day by making a few simple tweaks to their daily routines.

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Saving bees one hive at a time

The basics of backyard beehives



Scientists and environmentalists have been warning the public for years that honeybees are disappearing at alarming rates.

Scientists were initially uncertain in regard to what was decimating bee populations. Even though no single cause is to blame, data has pointed to pesticide use and the mysterious colony collapse disorder, which is a name given to the dwindling colonies seen around the world.

National Geographic News says bees are essential because of their roles as pollinators. Agriculture industries rely on honeybees, especially managed honeybees, to keep commercial crops pollinated and productive. Estimates indicate that roughly one-third of

U.S. crops rely on honeybees — accounting for more than \$15 billion in crop production. Without bees, the costs of everything from blueberries to apples to broccoli would rise, as farmers would have to use a different, more expensive pollination method. Even though backyard beehives or bee farms may not be crucial to consumer agriculture, bringing healthy colonies back to various areas is beneficial to the environment overall. The art of beekeeping has become an important endeavor, and just about anyone with some time and resources can start their own apiary.

Start by studying bees. Interested beekeepers can begin their journey by reading all they can on beekeeping.

The American Bee Journal or backyard beekeeping books and articles are great places to start. Local beekeeping associations also are invaluable resources for information on local bee species and traits.

Know the laws. It's important to get the go-ahead from local authorities before introducing bees into the community. By checking city or town ordinances, potential beekeepers will know how many hives are allowed and which type of property sizes are amenable and allowable.

Get the right supplies. Research can help prospective beekeepers understand the type of equipment they will need. One can purchase this equipment, but some beekeeping organizations may be willing to lend or rent it to interested parties. Hive boxes, bottom boards, a veil, a jacket, a smoker, and a top feeder are just some of the supplies needed.

Order bees. Bees can be acquired from other beekeeping enthusiasts or can be ordered online. The bees will need to consist of the queen, drones and worker bees. According to the resource Bees Brothers, a starter set of bees is called a “nuc.” Bee suppliers start selling in the winter for spring swarms.

Place the hive. It's important to set up hives away from foot traffic. In addition, face hives away from strong winds, with the ideal directions being east and south. Hives need sunshine and some shade on summer afternoons, advises BackYardHive. With time, homeowners can become successful beekeepers and do their part to replenish much-needed bee colonies.



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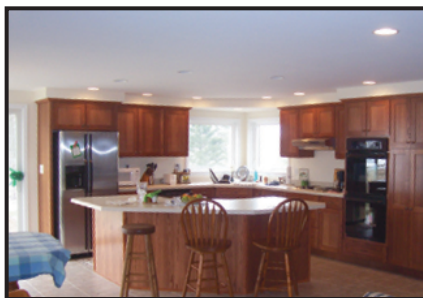
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How to banish pet odors from a home



Dogs, cats, birds, and lizards have evolved from wild animals and outdoor companions to become beloved, largely domesticated members of the family. The number of pets in homes across the country continues to grow. According to Statista, as of March 2017, 94.2 million cats and 89.7 million dogs were estimated to live in the United States as pets. Canada's Pet Wellness report estimates that there are approximately 7.9 million cats and 5.9 million dogs in Canada.

Over time, pet owners grow accustomed to their pets' antics, messes and even their odors. Dealing with smells is par for the course for pet owners, and many become desensitized to certain common smells. But when company is on the way or people are thinking about selling their homes, pet odors must be addressed. Even though it will take effort, homeowners can freshen their homes and eliminate unpleasant pet-related smells.

Find ways to ventilate. Odors can build up inside closed environments and prove overpowering. Opening windows when applicable, using exhaust fans and encouraging cross-breezes can air certain odors from the home.

Clean frequently. Cats and dogs can leave behind fur, dander, food messes, and more. Eliminating the debris that pets create can reduce odors. Sweeping, vacuuming and mopping floors can help as well. Don't forget to vacuum draperies and furniture, and consider purchasing

cleaning appliances specifically designed for homes with pets.

Keep on top of accidents and litter boxes. Puppies and even adult dogs may have their share of accidents. Cats may avoid litter boxes if they are not cleaned frequently and then soil around the house. Be sure to clean up pet waste messes promptly. Baking soda and vinegar solutions are all-natural ways to clean up and can help remove urine odors more readily. Also, look for safe deodorizing cleaning products that can be used on carpeting, flooring and upholstery.

Purchase an air purifier. Air purifiers can help remove odors and allergens from the air. They're relatively inexpensive and can be placed in rooms that pets frequent.

Wash pet blankets and beds. Launder pet beds, cloth toys, blankets, and any other items that pets lounge on. Sweat, saliva and dander can cause these fabrics to become stinky, and, in turn, make the house smell worse.

Keep pets clean. Most pets are very good at self-grooming, but can benefit from a spa treatment once in awhile. Dogs that spend ample time outdoors or frequently get wet and dirty may need routine baths. Ask a professional groomer what he or she recommends to address potent pet odors.

Neutralizing pet odors takes effort, but it can make for a more pleasant-smelling home environment.

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Enjoy more time outdoors with easy tricks

In centuries past, humans spent much of their time in nature, hunting, foraging and living life without the comforts of extensive shelters. Fast-forward several centuries, and the tables have turned dramatically.

The Environmental Protection Agency says the average person spends 93 percent of his life indoors, with 87 percent of the time inside of a building, and the remaining 6 percent in an automobile. These shocking results indicate that the equivalent of just one half of one day per week is spent outdoors. And people may be paying a price for spending so much time indoors.

There's various reasons to believe that being outdoors can be good for a person's health. The National Institutes of Health and Harvard Medical School say that, in addition to providing



Dining outside is one way to spend more time outdoors.

physical benefits, simply spending time in nature in any form can improve mental outlook, boost creativity, elevate mood due to natural light, improve concentration, and reduce stress. A study from the St. Louis University School of Medicine also said that spending time outdoors can help a person sleep better. That's because natural sunlight can set the body's internal clock.

Despite all of the benefits of getting outside, many people find it challenging to do so thanks to their busy schedules.

The following are a few ways to increase time in the outdoors that do

not require major commitments.

Bike or walk to work. For those who live close to their offices, walking or cycling to work is a simple way to spend more time outdoors. People who take public transportation can get off the train or bus a few stops early to get



some exercise and breathe some fresh air.

Lunch outside. Take your lunch hour outdoors rather than in an indoor cafeteria or restaurant. Office workers are urged to go to a park or green space to give their brains a rest from urban stimuli. Lunch is the ideal time to do just that.

Invest in a screen room at home. A screened-in porch, lanai or other space can bridge the indoors to outside and serve as a restful place to enjoy some fresh air while being protected from insects and inclement weather.

Set strict "no device" times. Schedule a time when devices are disconnected and the entire family enjoys some recreation outdoors. Let kids get back to the basics of bike riding, skating, playing pick-up sports games outside with friends, and all of the activities parents enjoyed as youths.

Dine al fresco. Opt for outdoor seating at a favorite restaurant. This will provide an hour or more to take in the sights and breathe some fresh air while enjoying a meal.

Meet friends at outdoor places. When engaging in recreational activities, plan them at outdoor venues, such as parks, beaches, town centers, boardwalks, and other areas where everyone can have fun and still be outside.

Fresh air, sunshine and time spent in nature are good for the mind and body. People concerned that they're spending too much time indoors should seek ways to spend more time outside whenever possible.

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How to create an eye-catching gallery wall



Gallery walls, also called moment walls, are one of today's hottest home decor trends. Gallery walls enable homeowners to create visually appealing groupings of photos, frames, wall art, and much more to dress up any room in the house. Gallery walls can make a statement in the living room, add finesse to an entryway or showcase special items along a staircase. One need only do a quick internet search or browse through lifestyle magazines to see examples of gallery walls for inspiration.

Anyone with a little determination can design a gallery wall.

Find your muse. The first step to creating a gallery wall is to choose a theme. If floral prints are your thing or you love abstract art, build your gallery around these elements. You can even use color or frame style as the coordinating factor.

Take your time. Some people rush into creating gallery walls, and that can be a mistake. Spend time picking out pieces and trying different combinations before you take out the hammer and hardware. The mix should be captivating and look like it was a curated collection. Some pieces can be high-end, while others may be picked up at flea markets or even be your own artwork or photography.

Experiment with dimensions and levels. Gallery walls need not be

restricted to flat photos on a wall. Texture and depth can be used in wall designs. Intersperse shelving, sconces, wooden letters, clocks, and more to make the gallery even more eclectic. Feel free to build the gallery around items that are in the house, such as windows or televisions. This can help electronics blend into the design.

Establish your focal point. Pottery Barn suggests making the center of the display at eye level, roughly 66 inches off the ground. Then build the gallery out from around that focal point. There are many patterns that can be built into the gallery, from "spiral" to "centered" to "reflection" designs.

Create a template. Lay the gallery design on the floor and cut newspapers or other paper to the size of each piece. Use masking tape to position these guides on the wall, trying a few arrangements until you are happy with the finished product. Then replace the paper with the artwork.

Hang items with precision. Don't skimp on technique. Use a ruler, level and the right tools. This ensures pieces are straight and in line with others.

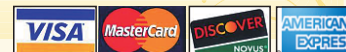
Gone are the days when large pieces of artwork fill empty walls. Gallery designs add statements and can balance rooms in creative ways.

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Six things to know about pitching a tent



Camping provides the perfect opportunity to get in touch with nature and disconnect from the daily grind. Camping is a timeless tradition forged by cooking over portable stoves, foregoing indoor plumbing and sleeping under the stars. A 2015 survey from Kamgrounds of America (KOA) said camping attracts people looking for an opportunity to explore the many wonders of the environment. The great outdoors affords people an opportunity to recharge in the peace and quiet of natural surroundings.

Results from the 2017 North American Camping Report found an increasing number of people say they plan to camp more, and camping is helping to add more balance to a person's life. Currently, 75 million households in the United States include active campers. Households in western Canada are likely to go camping, and data from Statistics Canada points out that camping rates increase with income. Although there are many ways to camp, tents are often key components of camping trips. Learning to pitch a tent correctly is an important part of successful camping. Here's how to become a tent-pitching pro.

1. Purchase a freestanding tent. While there are many variations to tent designs and ultralight backpackers may prefer a tarp or another non-

freestanding device, tents that are able to stand on their own are easier to set up. Many tent designs have two poles and fabric that creates a dome shape and are relatively easy and straightforward to set up in just a few minutes.

2. Practice at home. Before arriving at the campsite, learn to recognize the parts and instructions for your particular tent. Make sure all equipment is present and in working order.

3. Buy a footprint. Many tent floors are sturdy, but campers can always use a little extra protection against the ground. Footprints are essentially a tarp that fits underneath the floor of the tent as an extra layer of protection, advises REI. They should be slightly smaller than the area of the tent.

4. Scope out the tent location. Avoid sites littered with sticks, stones, roots, or branches. Stay away from low-lying areas that may get soggy in rain storms. Look for natural windbreaks, and place the tent so the side that has the strongest pole structure is facing the wind.

5. Make it a team effort. Enlist a helper or two to set up the tent. Ensure all zippers are closed when erecting the tent. Try to push poles through openings instead of pulling on them. Allow for some wiggle room when extending the poles. Guylines should follow the seams of the tent where possible, and lines should be pegged down back to front. Guylines help keep tents sturdy and also keep a rainfly away from the tent body to minimize leakage, according to the Appalachian Mountain Club.

6. Use daylight to your advantage. Set up the tent while it is light outside, and outfit it with anything that will be needed in the middle of the night, such as a lantern and other gear. Camping is easier when people can erect a tent swiftly and accurately.

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How to maximize your vacation time

Vacation is a time to kick back and enjoy life away from the stress and routine of home and work. Far too often, people do not take enough time to rest and recharge.

A report published by the Center for Economic and Policy Research found that the United States government doesn't mandate any paid vacation from businesses, and most employers that offer vacation time as perks give an average of 10 days. The same report found that Canadian workers are guaranteed two weeks of paid vacation days, with the exception of Saskatchewan, which mandates three weeks.

Even people who earn substantial vacation time each year may still not use those days, with many saying they simply cannot take time off and still complete all of their work. This doesn't have to be the case. Creative travelers can make the most of vacations, even when they only have a few days to do so.

Plan vacations with holidays in mind. Planning paid time off around holidays can be a smart move when vacation time is limited. Book trips around three-day weekends and other statutory holiday time to increase days away without digging too much into personal vacation time.

Take advantage of both weekends. Include both weekends in your vacation. For those with five workdays of vacation time to take, don't forget to flank that Monday through Friday with the Saturday and Sunday preceding it and following it. This affords you nine uninterrupted days of vacation time, which is enough time to travel to an international destination or to enjoy a multi-night cruise.

Embrace the weekend getaway. Getting away from home can reduce stress and help workers face the upcoming week and feel more rejuvenated. Take advantage of those free Saturdays and Sundays by booking trips that are a short car or plane ride away. When possible, leave on Friday evening and return home

on Sunday night to further stretch out time.

Plan flight times smartly.

Increase time spent at destinations by booking early-morning or late-evening flights. This way precious daylight isn't spent at the airport or in transit.

Transfer other work perks into vacation time. Speak with your employer to see if you can bargain for more vacation time. A married employee who gets health benefits through a spouse may not need insurance. See if that money saved can be put toward more vacation days instead. Some employers allow flex schedules as well. This means that employees can work longer hours per day in exchange for an extra day off each week or month.



Build vacation days into business trips. Find out if you can build onto business trips with an extra day or two for leisure. This way you can go sightseeing after putting in your hours for the company. Some families book vacations during business trips, meaning they upgrade to a larger hotel room and accompany the employee to the destination, utilizing whatever time he or she has off for pleasure. Vacation days are at a premium in North America. But with creativity, time off can be utilized in ways that ensure working professionals get the rest and relaxation they need.

How to approach air travel with kids in tow

The magic of flying has enamored adventurers since Daedalus took to the skies with handmade wings and the Wright brothers tested their preliminary aircraft in the fields of North Carolina.

Still, many parents have reservations about flying with children. Parents may worry about kids being restless or causing a commotion in-flight.

Some may even be concerned about youngsters getting sick when far from home.

While these are possibilities, oftentimes parents' concerns are unfounded. In fact, with some planning, flying with kids can be simple.

Build anticipation. Get young ones excited about the trip, and not just the destination. Explain the new sights at the airport and the technology involved in takeoff. For older kids, the promise of a meal out while waiting for the flight or

a new app to ease travel boredom may do the trick.

Bring along plenty of snacks. Many airlines have tightened up meal policies and may only offer a small snack and beverage during short flights. Kids may not be excited about that dry biscuit or a few pretzel sticks, so pack some of their favorite snacks.

Take advantage of boarding perks. Membership in travel clubs or travel credit card plans enable members to sit in more comfortable lounges or board early. Certain airlines give families with young children the chance to board first as well. This helps families get kids settled before the plane takes off.

Download beloved movies or apps. Kids can while away the hours with some entertainment, such as familiar movies or favorite games on their laptops, tablets or smartphones.

Get kids acclimated to flying at an early age to ease family travel.



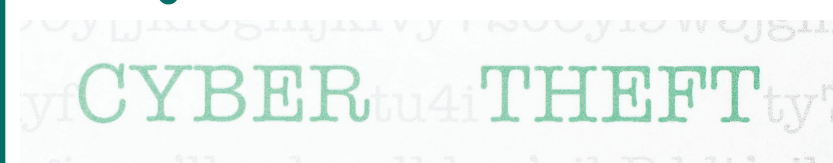
Ask for help. Sometimes flight attendants can pitch in with suggestions if kids need a little time out. Airlines may issue complementary "wings" pins or enable kids to meet the flight staff. Simply stretching their legs for a walk to another area of the plane may ease kids' boredom.

Time flights right. Children who are excellent sleepers may benefit from flights during naptime or bedtime, allowing parents to get a few hours of

peace and quiet. Those who do not sleep well may do better on daytime flights when they can remain more active.

Keep emergency supplies on hand. Kids have accidents or spill things. Keep a change of clothes in a carry-on bag so everyone can tidy up promptly. Families need not avoid air travel with kids. The sooner they climb aboard, the more adept kids will become at being frequent fliers.

Did you know?



Identity theft is a serious concern that affects millions of people. The 2017 Identity Fraud Study, released by Javelin Strategy & Research, found that 15.4 million consumers in the United States were affected by identity theft of some form in 2016. In those instances, \$16 billion was stolen. Protecting one's identity is not as complicated as it may seem, and it can safeguard consumers against fraud and theft.

- Password protect all smartphones and other digital devices. Many are used to transmit sensitive information and may store passwords and other data that connects to financial institutions.
- Do not click on links in unsolicited emails. Such links may contain malware or computer viruses.
- Don't provide Social Security numbers, birth dates or other personal information to unsolicited callers, no matter how official they may sound.
- Don't use the same password or PIN number on multiple sites. Vary the password and use a combination of numbers, symbols and uppercase letters to make it more difficult for thieves to decode.
- Do not keep all credit cards or important identification cards in a wallet at all times.
- Shred or destroy private records and statements.
- Monitor your credit report. Consumers can receive a free credit report from the three major credit agencies free of charge each year. Address any inconsistencies and report them promptly.

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How to travel on a budget and still have fun



Many people are passionate about traveling. Travel, whether it's domestic or international, can be an invaluable way to experience other cultures, meet new people and get a sense of history. As valuable as travel can be, many people feel they cannot afford to travel. However, there are ways to travel on a budget and still have fun.

Stay close to home. Men and women traveling on limited budgets can save money and still have fun by staying close to home. The closer your destination to your home, the less costly your trip figures to be. By visiting destinations that are within driving distances, travelers can save money on the cost of airfare, which is typically among the most expensive components of traveling. Road trips also afford travelers ample flexibility

that might not be available to travelers who are traveling abroad. That flexibility can make road trips more fun than more structured vacations.

Choose affordable destinations. Overseas travel is not necessarily more expensive than domestic travel. Certain destinations are ideal for bargain hunters year-round. Research affordable destinations via a Google search or utilize the "deals" sections on travel websites such as Orbitz®.

Cook some of your meals. Food is among the most costly expenses for travelers. Men and women can save some money by cooking some of their meals during their vacations. Doing so saves money on dining out, and travelers willing to experiment by cooking dishes native to the places they're visiting can have some fun in the kitchen.



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Travel during the offseason. Avoiding certain destinations during the height of their tourism seasons is another great way to save. The cost of lodging and airfare peaks during tourist season, but travelers willing to travel during the offseason can save substantial amounts of money. In addition to saving money on lodging and airfare, travelers who plan their vacations during the offseason may also save money on local attractions.

Do your homework regarding your destination. Thanks to websites such as TripAdvisor®, travelers can now learn as much as they want to learn about a given destination before they ever visit it. Such websites can be invaluable resources to travelers who want to enjoy their vacations but must do so on a budget. Research affordable tourist attractions and restaurants, even looking for free activities. Such research can be fun and make for more enjoyable trips.

Travelers who must travel on budgets can still have fun and make lasting memories on their vacations.



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Learn to downsize before a move



Ageing men and women often take inventory of their lives in an effort to focus on activities or lifestyle changes that can ensure happy retirements. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau shows there are some 76 million baby boomers — those people born between 1946 to 1964 — across the country. With the youngest of the boomers in their mid-50s and the majority having already reached retirement age, many boomers are trying to decide if it's time to move out of their family homes and into smaller, more manageable abodes.

Many older adults find they do not need the same amount of space as they did when they had children living at home. Retirees and those on the cusp of retirement may find that downsizing is a smart financial move that frees up more time for recreation.

However, it can be challenging to cut down on living space and then deal with figuring out how to make furniture, belongings and stored items fit in more condensed areas. Moving can be stressful even without having to cut down on prized items. Taking an inventory of belongings can help the process go smoothly.

Before moving, men and women can go room by room, making piles of items that will be kept, donated, sold, or discarded. This can be a tedious task, but it is necessary to avoid clutter in a new home. People downsizing can attempt to sell items they do not need via newspaper classified sections or online classified

sites. Appliances and furniture in excellent shape may fetch good prices. Any extra cash can be put toward buying new items that are size-appropriate for the smaller home.

Another way to clear out clutter is to sort duplicates from the stock of items. A person may no longer need multiple sets of dishes or silverware. If the move involves switching from a king-sized to a queen-sized bed, donate or trash bed linens that will no longer fit. Pay close attention to kitchen and bathroom items, which tend to accumulate over time but might not be discarded when clearing a home of clutter.

People moving from a detached home to a condominium or a townhouse may learn that homeowner's association fees cover everything from snow removal to lawn upkeep. If so, it's unnecessary to bring lawn and garden supplies.

Homeowners are advised to look at the floor plan of their new dwellings and pay attention to storage space. This can make it easier to plan ahead for what may fit, what will need to be purchased new and which storage solutions may be needed. Having a plan in place can make unpacking and settling in go smoothly. The organizing company Organize Me says that homeowners should consider how cabinets and closets will be used before moving in.

Downsizing can free up time and money. When done right, downsizing can make retirement easier and create more leisure time for retirees.



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How to choose the right window treatments for your home

Maximum privacy

Bedrooms, work spaces or bathrooms can benefit from extra privacy. While some people may think that privacy comes at the cost of light, that's not always the case.

Functional curtain panels can be drawn closed when privacy is desired and then opened to let in light. The thickness of the fabric will also dictate the amount of privacy the panels create.

Tiers are hung on a short rod-pocket panel and usually cover the lower one-third of a window. They're popular choices to let light in from the top, but obscure views from the bottom portion of the window. Cellular shades are another option that provide privacy but still let light in. Cellular shades come in hard and fabric varieties and their use depends on the room. Many cellular shades are constructed with a honeycomb design, offers the design resource Houzz, so they can insulate as well as decorate windows.

Blackout shades/shutters

Perfect for rooms where babies nap, shift workers rest during daylight hours or external lights, such as that from a street lamp, need to be blocked out, blackout shades do just what their name implies. A dense fabric lining helps keep light out entirely.

Shutters also can block out light but add to the character of the room. They can be painted a bright color to make a statement or match wall colors to blend in seamlessly.

When selecting window treatments, shoppers can choose retail options or custom treatments. Many designers recommend custom window treatments because they are measured, manufactured and installed specifically for homeowners' windows.

Plantation shutters? Mini-blinds? Cafe curtains? Formal draperies? Homeowners' options in regard to window treatments for their homes are extensive, which can make outfitting home interiors challenging for novice decorators.

Some people do not pay a lot of attention to window treatments, failing to realize just how great an impact the right window treatments can have on a space. According to the design experts at Hunter Douglas, window treatments are often an afterthought because residents may not consider them necessities. As a result, homeowners may install whatever is on hand or accept window treatments that came with a house or apartment. But ignoring window treatments, especially when they can fulfill certain needs, is a missed design opportunity.

One of the first steps to choosing window treatments is determining your end goal. Is privacy your main goal? Are you seeking more natural light in a room? Is there too much light and you need to darken the room? Window treatments can serve multiple functions, and some treatments may make better fits depending on homeowners' ultimate goals.

Semi-sheer window treatments

Semi-sheer window treatments are often fabric and can help brighten rooms with natural light but offer little privacy. They're usually appropriate for spaces where people gather, such as living rooms, dens or dining rooms. Semi-sheer curtains may be paired with another complementary window treatment so privacy can be customized as needed. For example, sheer curtains let light into a bedroom, but shades can be drawn at night.

5 reasons to try apple cider vinegar

Vinegar is a fermented liquid made from a wide array of ingredients that is used primarily to preserve and flavor food.

But the uses for vinegar are almost as extensive as the variety of flavors it's available in.

The word



“vinegar” comes from the French “vin aigre,” or “sour wine.” Vinegar is a diluted solution of acetic acid that forms with the fermentation of grapes, apples, rice, corn, and many other ingredients.

Apple cider vinegar, or ACV, is a type of vinegar that has recently skyrocketed in popularity due to its purported health benefits. ACV is formed from cider or apple must and has a long history as a home remedy, making it the most popular type of vinegar in the natural health community. The following are just a handful of the purported benefits credited to ACV.

1. ACV improves healthy gut flora. Like other fermented foods and beverages (think yogurt and kombucha), ACV is rich in enzymes and probiotics. Probiotics can aid in digestion and make sure that the digestive system is working efficiently. According to

the health and wellness team at MyFitnessPal, unpasteurized ACV can deliver probiotics and energize digestion. Others say that ACV can assist with easing an upset stomach by addressing unhealthy bacteria. Some remedies suggest that the pectin in ACV can help soothe intestinal spasms as well.

2. ACV can be used as a disinfectant. ACV and other vinegars can kill harmful bacteria or prevent them from multiplying, according to Healthline. ACV has historically been used as a disinfectant and natural preservative and may help reduce instances of E. coli. Those same antibacterial properties also may help head off infections of the throat. *Reader's Digest* indicates that gargling with ACV can soothe a sore throat and create an acidic environment in the esophagus that most germs can't survive.

3. ACV contributes to feelings of fullness. Many people insist that ACV

helps with weight loss. According to dietician and certified diabetes instructor Katie Rankell at UC Irvine Medical Center, ACV has been shown to lower blood sugar by reducing the absorption of carbohydrates, while also contributing to feelings of fullness that can help people avoid overeating.

4. ACV naturally lowers cholesterol. A 2016 study published in the *British Journal of Nutrition* found consumption of the acetic acid found in ACV reduced serum cholesterol and triglyceride levels in rats. More research is needed to determine if humans can reap similar rewards.

5. ACV can treat dandruff and other skin ailments. The acidity of ACV changes the pH of the skin and scalp, making it harder for yeast to grow. Applying ACV to the scalp can inhibit dandruff. It also can be used as a toner that exfoliates the skin and makes it less oily.



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