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HOMEOWNER'S — UPDATE —

Plants Can Help Improve Your Sleep

Surrounding yourself with plants is known to boost creativity, improve air quality, relieve stress, and help you get a better night's sleep. Consider adding some of these plants to your bedroom for a decor and mood upgrade.

Snake Plant - This natural air purifier is a great low-maintenance choice for those just getting interested in indoor greenery.

English Ivy - As a trailing plant, ivy helps absorb pollutants like formaldehyde and benzene, and some studies suggest it can improve allergy symptoms and even clear mold from the air.

Aloe Vera - Hardy and easy-to-care-for, this succulent releases oxygen at night and helps purify the air. The gel that forms in its leaves is also medicinal and can be applied to burns, scrapes, acne, and dry skin.

Gardenia - A bit more high maintenance, gardenia's scented flowers can help ease anxiety and promote restful sleep.

Spider Plant - A nontoxic choice, spider plants absorb airborne irritants and release oxygen. This hanging plant thrives in bright light and is easy to care for.

Some indoor plants can be toxic to pets so be sure to keep out of reach of any furry friends.

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3 Ways To Maintain Hardwood Floors

Keep your hardwood floors glowing like new with these simple tips.

- **Stick to the basics.** A simple solution of ½ cup white or apple cider vinegar mixed with a gallon of water is a natural and frugal way to make your hardwoods shine.
- **Turn off the brushes.** When vacuuming hardwoods, be sure to turn off the rotating brushes, as these can damage the floor's finish.
- **Hide scratches.** Choose a crayon that matches your floor color and rub the scratch until the gap is full. Use a hair dryer to heat the area for a few minutes, then buff with a soft cloth.

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How To Create a More Peaceful Home

If your home isn't a relaxing haven, these suggestions could help bring peace and tranquility to your living space.

- **Declutter and organize.** Start by removing as much clutter as you can, then work on organizing the rest. Designate a cupboard, drawer or basket for paperwork and files to keep them off your counters. Add hooks and storage bins near the entry door your family uses the most to provide a convenient spot for jackets, hats, backpacks, and shoes.
- **Rearrange your furniture.** If you keep bumping into a toy chest or having to walk around a coffee table to sit on the sofa, it might be time to rearrange the furnishings in your rooms. Try a few different configurations as you decide which provides the best flow for your household.
- **Choose calming colors.** Painting rooms soothing wall colors such as light gray, white, beige, or light blue can help create a warm and relaxing atmosphere.
- **Bring the outdoors in.** Potted plants and freshly cut flowers are a great way to add tranquility to your living space. Flowers don't have to break the bank either. Just purchase one bouquet and divide it among small vases placed throughout your home to provide a touch of serenity in each room.

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Tips and Tricks for Garage Reorganizing

Between sorting, repairing and reorganizing, cleaning out the garage can feel intimidating. Consider these ideas to help you tackle this big home project.

No wasted space – The garage can quickly become a dumping ground for all those household odds and ends. With that in mind, consider taking your space vertical. Add shelving, tool racks, equipment hangers, overhead storage racks, cabinets, and hooks to store your belongings just about anywhere in the garage. Don't be afraid to use all the walls, nooks, crannies, and ceiling. If you find yourself with lots of larger items, a garage organizational system may be the way to go. Installing factory-made wall panels with slats for storage accessories will give you the flexibility to hang tools as well as shelves, bins and baskets. Pegboards and magnetic wall strips are two less expensive options to hold smaller metal tools and other gadgets.

Organization – Once you have your space in good functioning order, it's time to sort your tools, lawn and garden equipment, sports gear, and hobby items. Depending on the storage you have on the walls, you may also need cabinets, shelving, cubbies, or other types of containers. Tubs, totes and bins provide protection from dirt and bugs. Be sure to group your smaller items by category and label each container.

Sustainability – Repurposing old or seldom-used tools and gadgets is both cost-effective and environmentally conscious. You can also use pallets as shelving, jars or buckets as containers, and old planters as bins. Use your creativity to design what is best for you and your space.

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Taco Casserole

Ingredients

1 lb. ground beef
½ yellow onion, chopped
2 Tbsp. taco seasoning
1 cup salsa
¼ cup water
1 (15 oz.) can black beans, drained and rinsed
1½ cups frozen corn
1½ cups Mexican Style cheese blend
3 cups tortilla chips
3-5 green onions, chopped

Directions

Preheat oven to 375° F. Lightly coat a 9 x 13-inch baking dish with cooking spray.

Cook beef and chopped yellow onion in a large skillet over medium high, then drain excess grease. Reduce heat to low, and add taco seasoning, salsa, water, black beans, and corn. Stir to combine and cook until warmed through.

Pour mixture into prepared dish and sprinkle with cheese. Lightly crush tortilla chips into bite-size pieces, and spread evenly over top. Bake for 15-20 minutes, until cheese is melted. Garnish with green onions.



Serves 8-10

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