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HOMEOWNER'S UPDATE

Fall Decor To Make at Home

Capture the spirit of autumn with creative, seasonal do-it-yourself crafts.

Rustic Mason Jars

Coat mason jars with white spray paint, then use another color to paint a seasonal design or write something fun and inspiring. You can also paint them with warm fall colors and distress them with sandpaper for a vintage look. Fill with autumnal flowers for a simple set of farmhouse vases.

Painted Pinecone Garland

Gather an assortment of pinecones and paint them with your favorite fall colors. String them together to hang across your mantel, or make a wreath for your front door.

Chalkboard Pumpkins

Paint pumpkins with chalkboard paint and have your family write messages on them for unique outdoor decor with a personal touch.

Fall Harvest Centerpiece

Cut a hole into the top of a small pumpkin and remove seeds and pulp with a teaspoon. Line the pumpkin with florist paper and fill with assorted fall foliage. You can also try this with other gourds to make a beautiful seasonal centerpiece for your table.

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The Psychology of Interior Design

Home design can have a powerful influence on your mood, productivity level and overall outlook on life. Understanding a few highlights of design psychology will help you create a comfortable ambience in your home.

- **Tap into natural light.** Research has shown that mood and energy levels are directly affected by the amount of natural light we take in each day. Light can decrease depression and increase cognitive performance. When designing your space, look for opportunities to maximize natural light. Position furniture near windows when possible, and use blackout curtains only where necessary. If you use curtains or blinds for privacy at night, be sure to open them when you wake, as starting your day with light can help reset your internal clock and improve your mood.
- **Organize and simplify.** A cluttered, disorganized home can make you feel unsettled. As you decorate, look for opportunities to get rid of things that don't serve a purpose or bring you joy. Organize your space by incorporating storage solutions such as shelving, hooks and cupboards.

- **Showcase your personality.** Your home decor says a lot about who you are. If you love to cook and entertain, you may want to make your kitchen a welcoming focal point of your home. If you are passionate about travel, you may choose to display photos from your adventures. If you surround yourself with things that make you happy, you're sure to improve your mood.

Set the Mood With Color

Color can have a powerful impact on your mood. If you're trying to evoke emotion or achieve a certain atmosphere, choose your colors carefully. Understanding color psychology can help you select the right hues to achieve your desired outcome.

- **White:** Simplicity, purity, spaciousness
- **Black:** Strength, elegance
- **Blue:** Freshness, calm
- **Green:** Nature, relaxation
- **Red:** Passion, intimacy, warmth
- **Yellow and orange:** Energy, happiness
- **Purple:** Luxury, decadence
- **Gray:** Intelligence, maturity, sophistication

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Tips for Balancing Household Chores

It can be a struggle to keep a house clean and organized, but managing the task will be made easier with a little preparation. Consider these tips for balancing household chores.

Talk it over.

Make a list of weekly tasks to help organize your workload. Discuss ways to divide chores and agree on a cleaning schedule that works well for everyone.

Recruit young helpers.

If you have kids, they can participate in an age-appropriate way, such as unloading the dishwasher or dusting furniture.

Purchase time-saving gadgets.

Whether it's a robot vacuum or a trash compactor, time-saving appliances allow you to spend more time on activities you enjoy.

Hire a cleaning service.

Depending on your budget, you may prefer to hire a service to do weekly, monthly or quarterly cleanings.

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Understanding HOA Limitations

Living in a community with a homeowner's association (HOA) can have many benefits, such as maintained common areas, neighborhood amenities and regular social events. Occasionally, though, an HOA may overstep its boundaries. The following are actions your HOA is not allowed to take.

- **Implement rules that violate the Fair Housing Act** – HOAs cannot discriminate against residents based on their race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability.
- **Require you to take down your satellite dish** – The Federal Communications Commission's Over-the-Air Reception Devices Rule protects your right to have a satellite dish, regardless of HOA regulations.
- **Prohibit you from solar drying your clothes** – Residents' rights to use a clothesline are protected in 19 states. Check your state laws before challenging your HOA on this issue.

- **Fine you without cause** – Your HOA cannot fine you for anything not outlined in the association's bylaws. Before paying a fine, read through the HOA rules to ensure it is legitimate and enforceable.

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Penne Pasta

Ingredients

3 cloves garlic, peeled
1 stalk celery, chopped
1 medium carrot, chopped
1 small yellow onion, chopped
1 Tbsp. fresh oregano leaves
2 Tbsp. avocado oil
2 Tbsp. tomato paste
1 pinch kosher salt
1 pinch ground black pepper
1 pinch red pepper flakes
2 (28-oz.) cans crushed tomatoes
5 large sprigs basil
(reserve 1 for garnish)
½ lb. penne pasta

Directions

Put garlic, celery, carrot, onion, and oregano leaves into a food processor and pulse into small pieces. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add chopped vegetables, and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in tomato paste, salt, black pepper, red pepper, crushed tomatoes, and basil. Bring sauce to a simmer, reduce heat to low and cook for 60-90 minutes, until thickened.

Just before sauce is done, prepare pasta according to package directions. Add drained pasta and sauce in pot. Stir to combine and serve warm with basil garnish.

Serves 4



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