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## HOMEOWNER'S UPDATE

### Choosing decor that's timeless vs. trendy

When redesigning your home, it can be challenging to choose between on-trend decor versus timeless pieces that won't go out of style in a year or two. How can you plan a design that's stylish but won't send you back to the drawing board too soon?

First, recognize that your tastes may change over the years. However, you can still create a foundation for your design that will have timeless appeal and require only minimal updates when you're ready for a fresh look.

Use these top tips to guide your design choices:

- Keep your most expensive purchases timeless. Choose neutral or classic colors for larger furniture, flooring, countertops, etc.
- Clean lines will stand the test of time. When choosing cabinetry or flooring, avoid the temptation to pick ornate designs, which may go out of style faster than you think.
- While repainting walls is not necessarily difficult, don't go overboard with bold colors. Stick to a neutral palette and sprinkle in adventurous hues through large wall hangings or painted accent walls.
- Choose trendy pieces that are easy and inexpensive to switch out. Throw pillows, accent chairs, light fixtures, lamps, and artwork are all great options to satisfy your taste for something new.

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### Safeguarding your home while it's on the market

While you hope the "For Sale" sign in your yard turns heads, make sure your property gets the *right* kind of attention.

Consider these simple precautions to protect your home from unscrupulous visitors:

- Invest in a smart home security system, and prominently display the security company's signs and stickers. A study from UNC Charlotte reported that 60% of convicted burglars said they avoided a home if they noticed a security system was present.

#### Also in this issue...

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3 In-the-kitchen hacks

Popular home lighting trends

Oat and Cinnamon Pancakes

#### Print this issue.



- Maintain your landscaping to signal that your home is occupied and being watched.
- Add motion sensor lights near entryways and replace any burned-out light bulbs to illuminate exterior steps and walkways.
- Secure prescription medications and any valuables in a safe or another discreet location during open houses and private showings.

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### 3 In-the-kitchen hacks

Food prep comes with an endless stream of challenges, but learning a few tricks can help you utilize your time in the kitchen more efficiently.

**Are the eggs spoiled?** Test your eggs to see if they're still good by gently setting them in a bowl of cold water. If they float, they're no longer fresh enough to eat. Over time, air bubbles form inside an egg as its liquid evaporates, meaning that the easier it floats, the older the egg.

**Tired of cherry pits?** Those little pits can turn a sweet snack into a hassle. To easily remove the pits, place cherries (one at a time) on top of an empty glass soda bottle. Then, use a chopstick or a skinny straw to push the pit out and into the bottle.

**Jar lid stuck again?** When having difficulty opening the lid on a jar, try stretching a rubber band around the rim. The rubber band will grip both your hand and the lid, limiting the slip factor and making this task a breeze.

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### Popular home lighting trends

Light fixtures are an easy way to make a statement in your home design. As a relatively inexpensive update, they are a great choice for refreshing a room on a tight budget as well as a safe way to try out new trends.

Here are some current lighting styles to inspire your space:

- **The new gold:** Soft gold is on the rise, bridging the gap between brushed silver and shiny gold. This subtle color blends with any decor scheme from farmhouse to modern.
- **Mixed metals:** Whether it's multiple metal colors on a single fixture or multiple fixtures in the same room, mixing metals is not only acceptable right now, but it's totally on trend.
- **Modern, clean lines:** Ornate metalwork is falling out of style as minimal, modern lights take center stage. Look for fixtures with clean lines, neutral colors, and simple, geometric designs.
- **Natural materials:** Wicker, cork, wood, clay, and bamboo shades are all options to bring a natural look to your fixtures. These materials are currently in high demand, and each one can add an interesting, earthy feel to your space.
- **Large and in-charge fixtures:** With the popularity of wide-open floor plans, larger fixtures create a statement without being overwhelming. Balance out larger fixtures by keeping others in the room smaller in size.
- **High-contrast black:** Especially popular in light, white kitchens, black fixtures provide high contrast to create dramatic lighting in a neutral space.
- **Vintage exposed bulbs:** Edison-style bulbs are preferred for the popular industrial look, and varying shades of color can contribute to the mood of your space. Try LED Edison bulbs for an energy-efficient option.

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## Oat and Cinnamon Pancakes

### Ingredients

1 cup whole wheat flour  
½ cup old-fashioned oats  
¼ tsp. salt  
2 tsp. baking powder  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1 egg  
1 cup milk  
2 Tbsp. brown sugar  
¼ cup plain Greek yogurt  
1 tsp. vanilla

### Directions

In a large bowl, combine flour, oats, salt, baking powder, and cinnamon. In a separate bowl, whisk together egg, milk, sugar, yogurt, and vanilla.

Pour wet ingredients slowly into flour mixture, and whisk until just combined. Do not overmix.

Heat griddle to medium, and grease with butter or cooking spray. Pour about ¼ cup of batter per pancake.

Cook for 2-3 minutes on first side or until bubbles begin to pop on the surface. Flip and cook for another 1-2 minutes until done. Serve immediately with syrup or honey.

*Makes 8 pancakes*



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