



News & Views

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Your FRONT Door

Give your front door some TLC and you'll be bringing a welcoming feel to your home - not to mention boosting curb appeal.

Get it Clean

You can start by doing a general clean. Remove dust and cobwebs, as well as any dust or dirt that has collected on your front porch. A clean front door is always more inviting than a dirty one.

Repairs

Is your front door chipped or damaged in any way? Perform the needed repairs and re-varnish, restain or repaint. If you've been thinking about giving your door a new colour, now is the time to do it!...you may have just enough time before temperature get too cold.



New Bling

An inexpensive way to improve your front door is to put on some new hardware. For a small investment, you can dramatically change the look of your front door. Perhaps it's a new... knocker, mailbox, kick-plate, or doorknob - something that adds drama or complements the style of your home.

Putting out the Welcome Mat

At the front door say 'welcome' with... a pretty door mat, a seasonal wreath, a pot of colourful flowers. All these decorative elements are inviting, homey touches that say 'welcome' and speak to the individuality of your home.

Seating

Your front doorway is a part of the entranceway to your home. By adding some seating you can give it an inviting look. If you have a covered porch, comfortable and useable furniture is a worthwhile investment. If your front door is open to the elements, consider using seating as a decorative element, for example; paint an old wicker chair or bench in a strong contrasting colour and set a pot of seasonal flowers on it.

Plants

Use potted flowers and plants, even small shrubs in urns around your front door to add another decorative element. Potted flowers and greenery can allow you to improve the design features of your front door, by accenting the architectural colours and textures as well as visually drawing the eye to the front door.

Lighting

Use lighting to your advantage. Unlit houses look uninviting while well-lit ones look warm and inviting. Consider adding solar lights - perhaps up the walkway leading to your front door. Exterior lighting not only adds aesthetic value to your home it offers safety and security benefits too.

The Value of a Front Door

If you are considering a new front door keep in mind that the value of this home improvement is high, provided that your current door is replaced with one that is superior in appearance and quality. Ditto for doorknobs and door hardware.

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Got Questions?

Your Realtor is your partner in selling what is likely your largest asset. Whether you need advice about getting your home ready to sell or have questions about current buying and selling trends - call on your Realtor who is available to assist you, every step of the way.

This & That

Stand up!

Sitting down? Get up - right now! Walking away from your chair every half hour while you're at work or at home watching TV or surfing the net sounds like the easiest prescription. It is. Breaks don't have to be time-consuming, even two minutes is beneficial - but, they should be frequent, every half hour or so. And, you need to move your legs - the act of standing and walking contracts the larger muscles of your legs and back, which activates an enzyme that cues muscles to take in fat and sugar from your bloodstream.

Here are a few simple ideas to help you introduce these kinds of mini-breaks into your day.

- stand up to use the phone - pacing while you're talking is even better.
- think of commercials as workout time, stand up and move!
- use movement breaks to perform small tasks; sweep the floor, take out the garbage, make a trip to the recycling bin, dust a windowsill or the coffee table etc.

Did you know...

- The strength of early lasers was measured in Gillettes. A Gillette was the number of blue razor blades a given beam could puncture.
- Apples, not caffeine, are more efficient at waking you up in the morning.
- Only 7% of Canadians are left handed.
- Most dust particles in your house are from dead skin.
- The microwave was invented when a researcher walked by a radar tube and a chocolate bar melted in his pocket.
- Hot water will freeze quicker than cold water.
- The average person over 50 years or age will have spent 5 years waiting in line.
- Most of us have swallowed a bug in our sleep.
- Your feet are bigger in the afternoon.



Fido's got the 'back to school blues'

Over the summer months, families often enjoy a more relaxed schedule. Kids are on break from school and most families either head off on vacation or spend more time at home. As a result family dogs often receive constant attention. Despite their best intentions, many pet owners don't realize that changes in the family's daily routine can greatly affect their pets. As kids go back to school, dogs lose devoted playmates and experience a profound change that can sometimes lead to unusual - and unwanted - behaviours. The stress of suddenly being left alone can lead to destructive or anxiety-related behaviours in dogs. Here are some useful tips to help your pet transition into the new routine.

- ✓ Increase your dog's exercise. This will encourage sleeping during the day.
- ✓ Keep arrival and departures very casual. Don't make a fuss or dole out extra attention as you're ready to head out the door. Upon arriving home, resist the temptation to immediately greet your pet, wait several minutes before calmly greeting, petting, then heading outside for a walk.
- ✓ Leave an article of clothing with a member of the family's scent in your dog's bed or crate.

'Tis the Season

To start thinking about turning on the furnace. To ensure your heating system runs efficiently and lasts longer...

Get an Annual Tune-up. A heating system needs annual maintenance to keep it running efficiently, and to repair minor problems before they become major ones (read expensive). Best time to book a service appointment; now - before you turn on your furnace for the season.

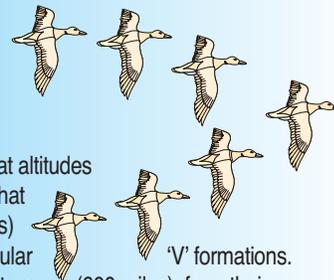
Filters. You've heard it before, but it's worth repeating. A dirty filter slows down air flow and wastes energy by making your system work harder. Change your furnace filter once a month during winter months, and at least once every 3rd month during the balance of the year.

Programmable Thermostat. If you haven't already, considering installing one this fall. Regulating and controlling the temperature in your home can save you up to 12% on your energy bill.



Migration

During migration, it is common for Canada geese to fly at altitudes of 300 to 1,000 metres (1,000 to 3,000 feet) at speeds that average between 60 and 80 kilometres (35 and 50 miles) per hour. Canada geese are usually seen flying in irregular 'V' formations. Some Canada geese will travel more than 1,000 kilometres (600 miles), from their summer grounds in Canada to wintering grounds in the southern and central U.S., in less than one week. Flocks with goslings migrating south for the first time take longer to reach their destination than flocks without goslings. Scientists believe Canada geese fly in 'V' formations for two reasons. One is to help the geese save energy, as the aerodynamic formation reduces drag across their bodies. The 'V' formation may also help geese quickly communicate changes in flight speed and direction.



Sleep better

Here are a few hints to help you drop off quickly and slumber soundly til morning.

- Try to turn in and wake up at the same time every day. But, don't worry if you like to sleep-in on weekends, new research shows that extra sleep does help to restore your body.
- A cool bedroom lowers your core body temperature, which initiates sleepiness. Ideal thermostat setting? Try 18°C (65°F).
- Carbs help your brain use tryptophan, an amino acid that causes sleepiness. Proteins help your body build tryptophan. Get the duo in a light bedtime snack of peanut butter on whole grain toast or low-fat cheese and crackers.
- Frazzled people sleep less and sleep quality is compromised, both factors contribute to increased stress levels. Try a warm bath before bed. Raising your skin temperature will help you to fall asleep faster and then shift you into deeper sleep.
- Cut off the coffee and other caffeinated

beverages at 2pm. If you feel drowsy late afternoon or early evening, take a short walk instead of pumping caffeine.

● Turn lights off - and away. Switch off the TV and computer, and face digital alarm clocks away from you.

● Create a separate bedroom for Fido - Fluffy too. A Mayo Clinic survey found that 53% of people who share beds or bedrooms with pets have disrupted rest. Don't have the heart to shut pets out of your bedroom?...at least set them up with their own beds, *on the floor*.

● Regular aerobic exercise - walking, biking, swimming, for 30 to 40 minutes, four times a week, improves sleep quality. You can break it up into 2 - 20 minute sessions if that fits better into your life and schedule. But, **do not** schedule exercise in the 3 hours before bedtime, the stimulation that comes from a workout may cancel the benefit.

Quick and Easy Decorating Ideas



▶ It's true - you never get a second chance to make a first impression. The entryway is the first area people see when they enter your home. Keep it neat! Make use of practical (but cozy) items like a small dresser, bench with storage (either inside or underneath), a mirror with a shelf or hooks, pretty containers as catchalls for keys and cell phones.

▶ If you love a trendy colour but are afraid to commit to it, try it out in small doses. Paint an accent wall, door, or inside a closet!

▶ The quickest way to add colour to a living room; throw cushions and pillows.

▶ Edit, edit, edit! Starting to feel that your rec room or living room is looking crowded and cluttered? Take a good, honest look and think about what you really need. Then discard, donate or store.

▶ Wish your windows looked taller? Try this simple fix....raise the curtain rod.

▶ Benches aren't just for entryways. Place one at the foot of a bed, or beside a chair. A great way to store extra things as well as creating additional seating.

▶ Looking for colourful, interesting objects to place on your coffee table? Pick out a few of your favourite books in a variety of sizes and colours, then display them front-and-center!

▶ Add a retro feel to the kitchen by displaying clear glass jars with grains, coffee, tea, pastas and other nonperishables on an open shelf.

▶ Add a touch of whimsy to your kitchen or breakfast nook...gather a set of mismatched wooden chairs, then paint them different colours.

▶ When choosing a rug size for a dining room, add 75cm (30 inches) per side to table dimensions for chairs with arms and least 60cm (24 inches) for chairs without arms. That way everyone will have room to pushout their chair to a more conversational position - before and after meals - without moving off the rug.

▶ If you have a variety of objects that are the same colour, gather them from around the house and group them together to create an eye-catching display.

▶ Give the illusion of a larger room without doing any construction. Paint walls a light colour for an airy feel. To make a low ceiling seem higher, paint it a cool colour, like dove gray, and it will visually appear to recede.

▶ Get maximum visual and sentimental effect by grouping photographs together. Walls in hallways, along staircases, and the rec room, are ideal locations for family photo groupings. Mismatched frame styles make for an interesting display...different frame colours?...simply use a can of spray paint. The same frame colour will give your display continuity.

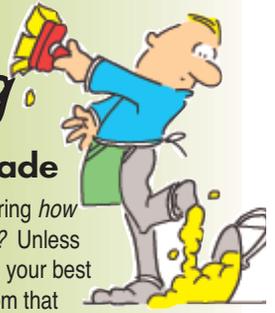


Mudroom

Although the concept is as old as the horse-drawn plow, today, a mudroom is likely wherever your family drops their stuff. **Which means 'location' is everything!** A mudroom should be - on the way in and out of - your home's most-used entry. **Here are a few tips for your 'mudroom entrance'.**

- ❖ A good doormat. One that soaks up water, scrapes off dirt, and is itself easy to clean.
- ❖ Kids' stuff. Put out a laundry basket for each child to stow shoes, sports gear, backpacks, schoolbags etc. A couple of wall mounted hooks right over their basket will tempt them to hang up their coats and jackets! You may even consider using different colours for each member of your household - that way there'll be no squabbling about someone using all the bins and/or hooks.
- ❖ The more wall hooks you put up the better...keys, umbrellas, purses, dog leashes etc. will be up off the floor - and drying!
- ❖ Old towels. Keep some handy for drying off the dog or soaking up puddles.
- ❖ A wall mounted 'collapsible' accordion laundry rack is an ideal addition to any mudroom.
- ❖ When it comes to storage bins - keep in mind that woven, mesh, even canvas, won't trap moisture like solid wood, plastic and metal do.

Painting



How to pick a paint shade

Gazing at a sea of paint chips and wondering *how do you begin wading through the choices?* Unless you're renovating your room from scratch, your best bet is to take a look at the items in the room that will not be painted or changed - things like curtains, floors, rugs or the fabric of sofas and chairs. These will guide you to suitable colours for your walls.

The #1 mistake to avoid - don't pick a colour in the store!

First, take home the paint chips and see how the colour looks under various lighting conditions in the room where it will be used. Then, once you've narrowed down your choices, you may want to buy a small test-pot of the colour and paint a piece of foam board or section of wood...put it next to flooring, drapery, upholstered furniture.

Now that you've decided on a colour, don't panic with the first roll of paint! In isolation, a colour can look too strong - you can only judge it accurately after two coats have been applied over the entire area. Also keep in mind that once everything, furniture, area rugs, throws and cushions, wall art etc. goes back into the room, the wall colour will be neutralized and you'll get a truer sense of it.

There aren't any strict rules about colour, colour is a personal thing. Do choose a colour that you like, and, do think about the purpose of a room and the mood you're trying to create - be it a calm and serene bedroom or a warm and bright breakfast nook.

How much paint will you need?

Follow these general guidelines to calculate how much paint you'll need.
1 gallon covers appx 375 to 400 square feet.
Perimeter x Wall height = total square footage.

To be safe (you'll want enough paint left over for touchups) divide your room's square footage by **375** to determine how many gallons you'll need. Remember, most likely you'll need to apply 2 coats of paint, so don't forget to 'double that number'!

4 Rules for dealing with Pro Painters

In theory, painting seems like a simple project. But, there is often more to it. Professional painters have the know-how and the right equipment (scaffolds, sprayers, sanders etc.) to get the job done right - and quickly. When hiring a pro, here are a few things to keep in mind.

- 1 Use the same guidelines you have for hiring other renovation professionals. Get references and call them; find out how long the painter has been in business; verify that the business has liability insurance; and ask for detailed written quotes that include start and finish dates and a price guarantee.
- 2 Take note of the little things. Does your contractor show up for appointments on time? Does he take notes and ask you detailed questions about the work to be done?
- 3 The price should include prepping, priming, painting, chalking trim, repairing imperfections; flaws and holes in walls and ceilings, as well as cleanup and touchups.
- 4 You choose the colours - have your painter purchase the paint. Your contractor will ensure that the right paint type - and paint finish - is used for the project.

In the Garden Leaves

While small amounts of autumn leaves are great for mixing into your compost bin, larger quantities are better kept separate and rotted down into leafmould. This can be used throughout your property; worked into the soil in the garden, spread on the lawn and around trees and shrubs. Leaves contain traces of substances beneficial to other plants. When added to the soil, their fine, crumbly texture is perfect for encouraging good root development. Some of the best leafmould comes from rotted beech and oak leaves. Deciduous shrubs such as dogwoods and forsythias are also good sources of material. Obviously evergreen needles should be avoided. If you don't have the space for a separate leaf container, gather up your autumn leaves and store them in large black plastic bags. Pack leaves in really tightly, and if they're dry, add a little water as you build up the heap. Tie the bags firmly at the top and then spear the sides several times with the tines of a garden fork (air speeds the rotting process). Store the bags in your garden shed, or under a tarp beside your composter, for at least a year. You'll know the leafmould is ready for use when it crumbles into small, flaky particles.

Tip Chop up leaves lying on the lawn with your lawnmower. Their tiny pieces

can then be easily absorbed by the lawn without you having to gather, bag, and store them.

Nature's Lungs

Neither people nor animals can live without plants. The trees and plants that cover our planet play a vital role in almost all ecosystems. Plants make their food from sunlight, water and carbon dioxide. The green leaves and stems are a plant's food-making factory. During the food-making process of 'photosynthesis', plants absorb carbon dioxide from the air, use the carbon and release oxygen as a waste product.

One mature healthy tree will absorb almost 12kg (26 pounds) of carbon dioxide annually and release enough oxygen for a family of 4 to breathe.



Words Of inspiration

Don't waste today worrying about yesterday.

The best accessory is a smile. Wear one often.

Never let a kind word go unsaid.

Teach what you know. Learn what you don't.

It is neither wealth nor splendor, but tranquility and occupation which give happiness.

Thomas Jefferson

Nothing happens unless first we dream.

Carl Sandburg

You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.

C.S. Lewis

Autumn Planting Trees

Trees are both beautiful and practical - whether you have a tiny lot, or vast acreage. Trees not only enhance the appearance of your property, they add value to your property. They also provide welcome shade in summer, wind protection in winter - and privacy. Autumn months are ideal for tree planting. Before you plant a tree, carefully evaluate your choice of tree, the space your property has available, the particular spot you'd like to place the tree and your soil conditions.

Here are a few pointers to help you select and plant a tree.

- Choose a tree that won't outgrow its location. Consider the tree's hardiness in your area, its adaptability to your soil, and its tolerance of pests, diseases, and drought. A local nursery can help you select the best trees for your area, property and exposure.
- Planting a large tree may give you instant shade, but trees shorter than 3 metres (9 feet) are much easier to work with and are quicker to establish themselves in your yard.
- Dig a hole that is equal in depth to the tree's root ball and three times as wide. The top of the root ball should line up with the existing ground level. If you dig a hole too deep, you'll have to fill it in with loose soil. This soil will then compact and the tree will sink - not good for the tree.
- Cut away the tree's container or the burlap and twine carefully so the soil doesn't crumble away from the tree's roots.
- Back fill around the root ball with the same soil you removed from the hole. After refilling the hole, water to settle the soil around the roots. Shape the soil like a large saucer around the base of the tree - this will help water reach the roots of the tree.
- Leave a 'protection zone'. A grass- and weed-free circular area, 1 metre (3 feet), around the tree's trunk will establish a buffer zone so lawn mowers and trimmers can't nick and cut the bark. String trimmers are a young tree's worst enemy. For added protection consider mulching the 'protection zone' you've established. Mulching will also help retain water and suppress weed growth.
- **Your tree needs extra attention throughout its first year.** Keep the area around the tree free of grass and weeds so the tree does not have to compete for water and nutrients. Water **deeply** every 3 to 4 weeks - and ensure the tree is watered just before the ground freezes for winter.
- It's usually not necessary, or even desirable, to support young trees with guide wires and stakes. Forced to hold itself erect on its own, a young tree develops a stronger trunk and root system. However, extra support is needed if you locate a newly planted tree in a windy spot or you want to correct a persistent bend. If you do decide to stake the tree, be sure to protect the tender trunk from the wires with short lengths of old garden hose.



Remember...check with your local utility companies before you dig!