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Tips to Get Your Home Ready for Fall - Inside and Out

It's that time of the year again when homeowners get ready for colder months ahead. Here's a list to get you started on your fall home maintenance.

Gutters and Downspouts

Make sure gutters and downspouts are free and clear of leaves and debris to prevent clogging and possible water damage to your roof or foundation.

Check the Roof

Inspect your roof for damaged or missing shingles. If you are not able to climb onto your roof, use binoculars to visually assess, and replace or repair as needed.

Seal Doors and Windows

Check for cold air entering the house by feeling along windows and doors. Improve energy efficiency by replacing or adding weatherstripping, and repairing or replacing cracked or damaged caulk.

Inspect the Fireplace and Chimney

This task is best handled by a professional chimney sweep who will remove creosote buildup, check the damper, firebox, and flue, so you can enjoy the cozy results.

Service the Heater

Schedule an appointment with a professional for a maintenance check before you begin using your system for the winter.

Test Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Replace the batteries in your carbon monoxide detectors and ensure they work properly as you head into the colder months. Do the same for your smoke detectors as well.

Clean Your Dryer Vent

Remember to remove lint buildup from the dryer vent. This often overlooked task can prevent dryer fires and improve your dryer's efficiency.

Get Your Lawn Ready for Cold Temps

Give your lawn a step up before winter arrives. Begin by raking it. Next, aerate your lawn and apply a fall fertilizer. If necessary, protect temperature sensitive plants from freezing.

Put Away Outdoor Furniture

Before storing your outdoor furniture, toys, and equipment such as grills, make sure they are clean and ready for spring. You'll thank yourself later.

By tackling these tasks now, you can protect your home the winter elements and enjoy comfort in the colder temps.

October Calendar

October 12- National Farmers Day

October 16 - Boss's Day

October 31 - Halloween

October 6 - 12 - Fire Prevention Week

Homeowner Tips



Reverse Your Ceiling Fans

During cooler months, set your ceiling fan to rotate clockwise at a low speed to create an updraft. This will help redistribute warm air that rises to the ceiling. Circulating this warm air back down to the room, you can make all the living spaces in your home feel warmer without having to rely on your home's heating system as often.

Create a Cozy Guest Room for Holiday Visitors

Do you find yourself with a house full of guests during the holidays? Here are some ideas to help you create a cozy guest room.

Bedding: Invest in good bedding, soft sheets, cozy blankets, and quality pillows, with extra throw blankets for colder climates.

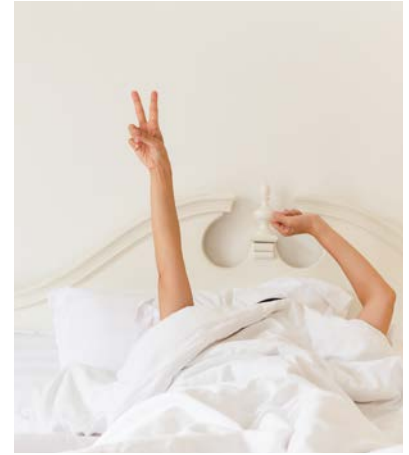
Lighting: Keep it soft, but provide ample and properly focused lighting, such as bedside lamps, overhead lights, and even a reading light if possible.

Seating: Provide a comfortable chair for your guests to relax and enjoy quiet time.

Storage: We know your guests arrive with overnight bags or suitcases they are dying to unpack. Provide closet space with hangers and/or empty drawers to help them settle in.

Calm Colors: If possible, create your guestroom using a neutral and calming color palette. Neutral color palettes tend to create a calm and inviting atmosphere.

Tech Necessities: Make sure your guests have all the essentials needed for their devices. This might include a charging station and a Wi-Fi password for your guests convenience.



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How to Make Perfect Polenta

Ingredients

- 4 cups water *or* chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon fine salt
- 1 cup polenta
- 3 tablespoons butter, divided
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, plus more for garnish.

Directions

Bring water and salt to a boil in a large saucepan; pour polenta slowly into boiling water, whisking constantly until there are no lumps.

Reduce heat to low and simmer, whisking often, until polenta starts to thicken, about 5 minutes. Polenta mixture should still be slightly loose. Cover and cook for

30 minutes, whisking every 5 to 6 minutes. When polenta is too thick to whisk, stir with a wooden spoon. Polenta is done when texture is creamy and the individual grains are tender.

Turn off heat and gently stir 2 tablespoons butter into polenta until butter partially melts; mix ½ cup Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese into polenta until cheese has melted. Cover and let stand for 5 minutes to thicken.

Stir polenta and transfer to a serving bowl. Top polenta with remaining 1 tablespoon butter and about 1 tablespoon freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese for garnish.



Photo and recipe courtesy of: Allrecipes.com