smart moves

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7 Tips to Get Your Home Guest-Ready in a Snap

The season is upon us! But if you are like many of us, your schedule is packed enough without the holiday extras. And at this point a deep-clean of your house might not happen anytime soon. Don't despair! Following are some quick and easy tips to get your home guest-ready on the fly:

#1 - Light a Candle (or Two): If you only have time for one thing, smell-good mood-setting is a perfect way to transform rooms quickly. Candlelight has a way of making spaces feel warm and welcoming and like you planned things in advance. Place a candle near the entryway so guests feel comfortable as they come in. Scents like vanilla, fresh linen or earthy cedar scents work best.

#2 - Tidy Your Entryway: First impressions set the stage for what's to follow, so make sure your entryway looks organized and tidy. Hang coats, put away shoes, and wipe down furniture, door knobs and doorway windows. And remember to take some time to tidy the outside area of your entryway by removing clutter and debris.

#3 - Declutter Your Countertops: Put away your mail, wipe down surfaces and set out appetizers. Remove anything on your countertops that isn't necessary.

#4 - Do a 10-Minute Vacuum: Floors really stand out due to their large surface space. A clean floor instantly elevates your space and makes things feel lighter and fresher. Vacuum lines in particular show that you've made an effort.

#5 - Empty the Kitchen Trash: Take a moment to remove kitchen trash containers, and with it, bad smells.

#6 - Freshen Your Guest Bathroom: More than likely every guest will pay a visit to your bathroom. A clean guest bathroom goes a long way as far as first impressions go. Make sure you have clean handtowels. Wipe down the sink and toilet area. Tidy up the countertop.

#7 - Tidy the Living Room: Plump your pillows, arrange throws, clean off the coffee table and rely on lamplight and candles rather than harsh overhead lights.

November Calendar

Nov 1 - Daylight Saving Time

Nov 11 - Veterans Day

Nov 26 - Thanksgiving Day

November is National Gratitude Month

Homeowner Tips



Yes, You Can Recycle That!

Following are 3 things you might have thought you can't recycle easily:

1) Plastic Grocery Bags: Keep them out of landfills by returning to your nearest big-box store or go to plasticfilmrecycling.org.

2) Old Cell Phones: Donate them to Cell Phones for Soldiers or the 1Million Project for low-income students to access the internet.

3)Lithium Batteries: They contain valuable materials and can be recycled at Call2Recycle.

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Meaningful Ways to Celebrate Veterans Day

Get outdoors: Did you know all national parks offer free entry on Veterans Day? If you live near a national park and if the weather is good, make it a point to visit your nearest national park--for free.

Go to a Parade or Veterans Day Event: Every year, cities host large parades and the Veterans Day National Ceremony takes place at Arlington National Cemetery on November 11. There is likely a scheduled public event for Veterans Day in your neck of the woods, too.

Donate to the Veteran Community: You can volunteer or donate to a charity that helps veterans in need. Or, you can participate in a clean-up at a military cemetery or memorial.

Fly the Flag: Acknowledge the service of veterans visually and symbolically by flying the American flag at your home.

Visit a Memorial or Cemetery: If you have a loved one that has passed defending our nation or are close to someone who has, a great way to honor their legacy and to show support is by visiting their grave or memorial.

Host a Get-Together: Make the day special by socializlng with friends and family in honor of all veterans.

Express Thanks: Take time to say "thank you" to all the veterans you know in your community and through your social circles.



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Fiesta Cheese Appetizer

Some say this appetizer hails from Venezuela but it's also a classic go-to in the U.S. Whether you dress it up or go basic this ever-popular app is ultra easy, quick and tasty. Serves 6-8.

INGREDIENTS

1 package of your favorite crackers

1 package cream cheese

1 jar red pepper jelly

DRESS IT UP WITH:

1 tbsp finely chopped fresh thyme

1/8 cup toasted pecans

1/8 cup dried cranberries

DIRECTIONS

Put softened cream cheese in a mixing bowl. Add the thyme, pecans and cranberries. Mix well. Scoop the mixture into a bowl or shape of your choosing and refrigerate until the mixture is solid and formed.

Carefully distribute the shaped cream cheese concoction onto a charcuterie board or a decorative plate. Arrange the crackers around the cream cheese. Pour the red pepper jelly over the cream cheese. Make sure to add a cheese knife so that guests can cut portions from the cream cheese creation to place atop their cracker. Enjoy!

