

Getting Your Home Summer-Ready

Summer officially arrives this month, so to help make your summer go swimmingly (pun intended), here's a handy checklist to get your home ready:

- Gather all your summer necessities into a basket and place it at your front door to easily grab and go (e.g., sunglasses, sunscreen, bug repellent, etc.).
- Schedule a maintenance check-up for your A/C.
- Clean and organize your shed, garage, and/or outdoor seating area.
- Find ways to help keep the temperature cooler, such as repairing damaged caulking or weather stripping, unplugging appliances when not in use, and making the switch to LED light bulbs.
- Inspect door and window screens to see if any need to be repaired or replaced.
- If you have play equipment, check for safety, ensuring the wood, ropes, and fastenings are in good condition.



- Do a thorough cleaning of your barbecue, have the propane tank inspected if it's been over a year, and refill or replace it if necessary.
- Trim any shrubs touching your home's exterior to help prevent pests.

Once your home is summer-ready, you can enjoy the fresh summer breeze that comes in through your windows even more. Happy Summer!



Streamlining Your Garden Work

Do you sometimes find that watering plants can end up being more of a chore than anything else? If the answer is "yes," then you may be interested in automatic watering systems.

One option is a **drip irrigation system**, available in several varieties for both in-ground and container gardens. Drip irrigation systems release the right amount of water directly into the soil through tubing with emitters, connected to a water source and controlled by an automated timer for a slow, steady flow.

Wicking systems are another option for containers that draw water up from a built-in reservoir at the bottom of a container.

For a simple DIY option, you can use an **upturned plastic bottle** placed near the roots of a plant. Make small holes in the cap with a nail and hammer for the slow release of water and cut off the bottom of the bottle so you can refill it.

Automated watering systems can offer **peace of mind when you are away**. However, it's important to keep in mind that some systems require an initial **installation cost** and **frequent maintenance** to ensure they continue to run smoothly.

If you are considering an automated irrigation system, first research whether your municipality has any **irrigation restrictions**.

Bringing the Outdoors In

Biophilic design, which is essentially bringing elements of nature into your home's décor, is one of the most popular design trends for 2025 according to design experts. So, what are some of the ways you can create nature vibes in your home?

- **Add greenery** — House plants of different sizes, as well as trailing ones, such as pothos can improve air quality and increase focus.
- **Bring in the natural light** — Large windows and skylights maximize the amount of natural light coming into your home. Natural light helps regulate sleep, boosts productivity, and mood.
- **Integrate natural materials** — Elements such as wood, stone, bamboo, and tree bark add dimension and a sense of timelessness.
- **Include curvy shapes** — These shapes emulate nature and exude an inviting atmosphere, while straight lines and sharp edges tend to feel more artificial.
- **Let the water flow** — The sound of water flowing from a small fountain can help create a calming effect.
- **Incorporate fire** — A real or electric fireplace is a way of incorporating one of the four elements of nature (fire, air, water, and earth) indoors.

For more ideas and inspiration on how to transform your home



into a nature-inspired retreat, check out the plethora of design ideas online.