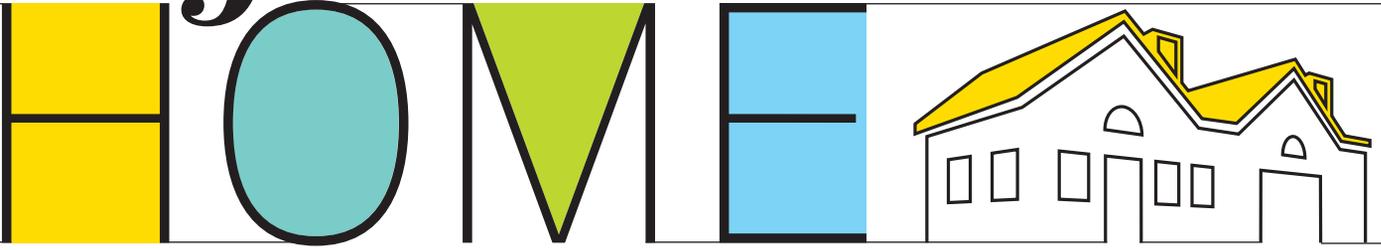


# your



Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

## Home Office Décor

**A**s more people are transitioning to working from home in some capacity, the need for a well-designed home office is paramount. Having a space where you feel comfortable and motivated will lead to increased productivity and happiness. To create the perfect home office space, consider the following tips:



► **Embrace Your Windows.** You may be tempted to place your desk in the corner, but consider having it sit in front of the window, parallel to the panes. This allows you to have the benefit of natural light when working, providing a nice view of the outdoors to keep your mind clear.

► **Lamp Lighting.** A table lamp is best when working during the darker hours of the day. Strictly using overhead lighting creates an uncomfortable work environment, so supplement with the softer light of a lamp.



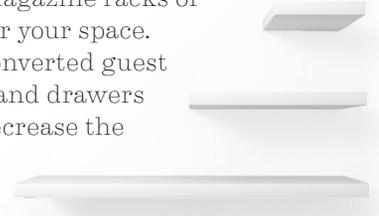
► **Comfort is Key.** Sitting upright at a desk may lead to fatigue, so every home office should have a place to get comfortable. Add a comfy chair or small sofa (with an ottoman to kick your feet up) for a nontraditional workspace, helping spark creativity.



► **Go Green(ery).** Adding plants or flowers to your workspace can increase your happiness and your willingness to spend time in your office. Consider populating the office with plants that don't need water every day, in case you prefer to disconnect from all things work-related on the weekends.



► **Smart Storage.** Install magazine racks or wall shelves to declutter your space. Is your home office a converted guest bedroom? Add shelves and drawers to the closet space to decrease the need for storage in your main workspace.



## Safe and Secure

Protecting your property—and your loved ones—is a top priority for homeowners. Adding a home security system can provide peace of mind and help ensure the safety of what you hold dear. With current technology, installing security cameras is easier than ever. But owners still need to properly prepare before jumping into the project.

**Planning**—Owners need to select the right security system to fit their home's needs. Before purchasing equipment, start by identifying your home's vulnerabilities and determining key access points. This can help you assess the size and type of security system needed. Also consider the type of security cameras that will be used. From outdoor/indoor to wired/wireless, there are many options to choose from. Proper research and planning will help prevent headaches and save you money when shopping for equipment.

**Placement**—Every home is different, but the general rule is to always place a camera at your front door and back door, as these are the most common points of entry. Gates or garages are other areas where you may want to install cameras, and keep in mind that some walkways may need more than one camera to properly capture the entire area. Make sure to place the cameras facing slightly downward to accurately detect motion.

**Installation**—Once you've determined where the cameras will go, keep these things in mind. Make sure to mount the cameras out of reach from anyone on foot, as an intruder could otherwise break or disable them. Place the cameras in a position to avoid backlighting and lens flare. This means point the cameras away from areas that may have a strong light/reflection (like the sun or a street lamp) in the background to create a clear view. And ensure the cameras are not able to capture the inside of a neighbor's property, as this is a privacy violation.



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**DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS THINKING ABOUT BUYING OR SELLING A HOME? PLEASE MENTION MY NAME.**

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Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

## Affordable Improvements

**R**edesigns or remodels can leave homeowners with a hole in their pocket. What start as great ideas can quickly snowball into significant expenses. But sprucing up your home doesn't have to come with a hefty price tag. Here are some home improvement projects that aren't incredibly time consuming and can easily be accomplished for less than \$100 each.

- 1. Closet Organization.** Consider adding bins and drawers to your closet space to keep your clothes organized and to brighten your mood.
- 2. Outdoor Walkways.** Adding a stone or wood path in your yard is an inexpensive way to liven up an outdoor space.
- 3. Climate Control.** Not only are programmable thermostats inexpensive, but they will also save you money down the road by controlling your home's energy output.
- 4. Easy Backsplash.** Peel-and-stick backsplashes are simple, inexpensive and look just as professional as traditional grout and tile or stone installations.
- 5. Update Lighting Fixtures.** Remove your old and dated light fixtures and replace them with options that are inexpensive, yet stylish.
- 6. Upgrade Your Bathroom.** Installing new shelves, adding a new coat of paint or displaying new art can transform your bathroom from boring to beautiful.
- 7. Kitchen Cabinet Painting.** Consider painting the top and bottom half of your kitchen cabinets with two complimentary colors to add dimension and depth.
- 8. Install Track Lighting.** Add track lighting under your cabinets to brighten the room.
- 9. Entryway Ideas.** Add hooks/hangers, benches and overhead storage space to create a welcoming entryway for you and your guests.
- 10. Hardware Upgrade.** Replace your drawer and door handles/knobs with fresh designs to spice up your living space.



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