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# HOMEOWNER'S

## Practical Advice for Updating the Primary Bathroom

A bathroom remodel in the primary suite can be more than just a facelift. Here are some key considerations that can help turn your bathroom into a functional and comfortable retreat.

Begin by determining the scope of your renovation. Do you want to upgrade the vanities, tub and shower in their existing locations? Or do you want to completely redesign the floor plan? Will this be a DIY project or do you want to hire a licensed contractor for some or all of the remodel? Next, decide whether you prefer a single or double vanity, how much counter space you need, and the style of cabinets and fixtures you want.

Once you've established the basics, you can start designing your project or working with a contractor. When mapping the floor plan, consider the cost savings when the existing plumbing and electrical systems can be used. Also, remember to account for any additional space a new feature may need. For example, a freestanding soaker tub requires more floor space than a built-in tub. Interior designers also recommend installing the toilet out of direct view of an open door. Position it in a less exposed area, or if space allows, add a water closet for complete privacy.

For a well-structured layout, consider defining separate areas for the vanity, bathtub and shower. You can do this with thoughtful fixture placement, partial walls and strategic material choices, such as tile around the bathtub and shower. Make sure each of these areas has adequate lighting.

Plan for plenty of storage to keep your bathroom organized. Set aside designated spaces for everyday essentials, and include shelves, cabinets or a small closet for towels and linens.

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#### Choosing a Home Security System

One of the best ways to protect your property from intruders, vandalism and theft is with a home security system. Choosing the one that best suits your needs can help ensure safety and give you peace of mind.

Also in this issue...

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Perfect Backyard Privacy

Ceiling Fan Cleaning Tips

**Fresh Corn Fritters** 

Print this issue.



#### Installation

Many DIY systems come pre-programmed and even have peel-and-stick equipment for ease of installation. However, professional installers are security experts who know how to maximize your protection.

#### Monitoring

Professional monitoring is costlier than self-monitoring because it automatically alerts authorities if an alarm is triggered and offers greater protection than a DIY system, which typically relies on phone alerts. Additionally, a monitored system might even save you money on your homeowners insurance. Expect to pay monthly or annual fees, and be mindful that contract lengths can range from monthly to multi-year agreements.

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#### **Perfect Backyard Privacy**

If your backyard oasis is too open for your liking, there are plenty of inventive ways to add privacy. From seasonal solutions to innovative landscaping and stylish barriers that don't look like barriers at all, consider these suggestions to create a perfectly private patio, porch or deck.

#### Temporary

Create a vertical garden — and a natural privacy screen — with a wood or metal trellis paired with your favorite flowering vines. You can also install a retractable awning or outdoor curtains to provide coverage when needed depending on the weather or time of day.

#### Permanent

To create a more secluded space, consider installing a barrier, such as lightweight screens, a brick wall or a metal panel. Another option is using a tall fence to block sightlines without sacrificing light or airflow. If you have an existing half-wall or railing, extend it upward with a wood or vinyl lattice. Of course, planting hedges and dwarf trees is the natural way to provide privacy, but those may take several years to mature.

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#### **Ceiling Fan Cleaning Tips**

Regular cleaning keeps your ceiling fan functioning efficiently and helps improve air circulation. Follow these steps to remove the accumulation of dirt, dust and pollen on the blades.

**Practice safety first.** A quality ladder is always your best first step. Be sure the power switch is turned off.

**Dust the blades**. Use a microfiber cloth or slip a pillowcase over each blade individually and wipe gently.

**Clean with a solution**. In a small bucket, mix warm water and 1-2 drops of mild dish soap. Dampen cloth in bucket, then squeeze out excess moisture. Carefully wipe each blade.

Wipe the entire exterior. Use a dry cloth to remove dust on the motor housing and light covers.

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#### **Fresh Corn Fritters**

#### Ingredients:

5 Tbsp. yellow cornmeal <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup flour 1/2 tsp. baking powder 1/2 tsp. salt 1/2 tsp. pepper 1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped 5 Tbsp. milk 1 egg 2 cups fresh corn kernels 2-3 Tbsp. avocado oil



#### Directions:

In a large bowl, whisk together commeal, flour, baking powder, salt,

to medium-high and add oil to pan.



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Len & A your day of the dipping sauce.

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