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HOMEOWNER'S UPDATE

Luxury Closet Features

Closet design in the primary bedroom has become a new luxury feature in homes. Here are some of the most sought-after items for those who want to enhance the style and storage in their closets.

Upgraded Lighting

Many homeowners are adding dramatic lighting in their closets. Some popular choices include lighted clothing rods and shelves, chandeliers and sconces.

Built-in Dressers

Integrated storage and built-in dressers are must-haves for homeowners seeking to keep all their clothes and accessories in a single, organized space.

Storage for Valuables

Many homeowners want drawers specifically designed to hold jewelry, watches, sunglasses, and other small valuables. These locking drawers are often lined with velvet or satin. A small safe is another important item to conceal within the closet.

Dressing Areas

A large, attractive space with a full-length mirror, comfy seating and even artwork is increasingly popular for dressing areas in the closet.

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Keep Your Dryer Vent Clean

At least once a year, clean out your dryer vent to improve your dryer's overall operation and longevity. This practice also lowers fire risks and your utility bills. Follow these tips for better function and safety.

- Unplug the dryer, pull it away from the wall and disconnect the duct.
- Vacuum the inside of the vent.

- Insert a dryer-vent brush into the duct. Move it back and forth while rotating to clean out any dust attached to the side of the vent. Continue to extend the brush until the vents are free of lint and dust.
- Reconnect the duct and plug in the dryer.
- Inspect the vent on the outside of your home and be sure the flap opens easily when the dryer is on.

In addition, be sure to clean out the lint trap before each drying cycle. If you use dryer sheets, you may notice a residue that builds up on the lint screen over time. If the screen becomes clogged, wash it in warm, soapy water using a soft scrub brush. Be sure to rinse and dry the screen thoroughly before inserting it back into the dryer.

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Weed Prevention

Pesky weeds are sure to pop up in your lawn and garden as planting season begins. Get ahead of them by following these simple steps.

Nourish Your Lawn

Proper lawn nourishment offers the best weed prevention. Use a lawn fertilizer every 6 to 8 weeks to keep your yard healthy and lush, leaving less room for weeds to grow.

Pull Weeds by Hand

If you only have a few weeds, you can hand-pull them to save time. It's most effective to pull weeds that are young with shallow roots.

Apply Weed-Killer

If weeds persist, you may consider using weed-prevention products or herbicides. You can find a variety of these products, including eco-friendly brands, at your local lawn center.

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Add New Color to Your Home

Is your home starting to feel too neutral? Would you like to brighten it up? Adding accent colors is easier than you might think. Try these tips for incorporating pops of color in your decor.

Add Accents

Adding colorful accessories is one of the easiest ways to brighten up your interior. Shop your local home accessories store for vases, faux flowers, silk plants, throw pillows, books, and other eye-catching knickknacks.

Colorful art pieces can also personalize blank walls. A single large painting can make a bold statement and become the focal point of the room. For a more eclectic look, hang multiple pieces of art.

Throw pillows, shams and afghan blankets help to dress up your bed. If you have a neutral bedding palette, anything goes. You can also place colorful cushions and pillows on dining benches, breakfast nooks, couches, and chairs.

Paint & Pattern

Consider brightening up your living room with an upholstered piece of furniture. Choose a floral or patterned fabric to have an old chair or loveseat reupholstered and rejuvenated.

Lackluster furniture, such as a bookcase or end table, can be transformed with a colorful coat of chalk paint.

If you want to make a larger statement, paint an accent wall in your room. Test a few different sample shades in different lighting to be sure you pick the perfect color.

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Steak Kabobs

Ingredients

1 large zucchini, sliced
1 pint cherry tomatoes
2 yellow peppers, sliced
1½ lbs. strip steak or tenderloin, cut into 1½-inch cubes
2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Sauce

¼ cup ketchup
2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
2 tsp. steak sauce
Pinch red pepper flakes

8 10-inch skewers for serving

Directions

Place veggies and meat in a large bowl. Add vegetable oil, salt and pepper, and toss to coat. Thread veggies and meat onto skewers. In a small bowl, combine sauce ingredients and stir until thoroughly mixed. Set aside. Heat grill to medium-high and brush grates with vegetable oil. Grill kabobs, turning occasionally, about 6-7 minutes. Serve with sauce.

Serves 4

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