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HOMEOWNER'S UPDATE

3 Simple Ways To Update Your Kitchen Cabinets

If your kitchen needs an upgrade but you're not ready for a full renovation, updating your kitchen cabinets can make a big difference. Consider implementing these simple, inexpensive ideas.

Choose New Colors

Painting your cabinets a fresh color can give your kitchen an instant face-lift. Think about using colors other than white for an up-to-date look. Another trendy option is to paint upper and lower cabinets different colors. To really make a statement, choose a darker color for the bottom cabinets and a lighter color for the upper cabinets.

Upgrade Cabinet Hardware

Updating drawer pulls and knobs is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to refresh dated cabinets. By matching the width of your new hardware with the existing cabinet holes, you'll be able to make an easy switch with just a screwdriver.

Add Open Shelving

A simple way to incorporate the open shelving trend is by removing a few cabinet doors. (You'll need to fill in the holes where the hardware screws were.) Use these open cabinets to display your favorite dishes, glassware and serving pieces.

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Pick the Perfect Finish

You've mulled over paint colors and finally decided on just the right shade. Now that the big decision has been made, you'll be asked what finish, or sheen, you prefer. Sheen is determined by the amount of light reflected from the surface. Use this guide to help you select the right look for your project.

Flat Finish

No sheen
Masks imperfections
Tough to clean
Use in low traffic areas
Ideal for bedrooms and ceilings

Eggshell Finish

Low sheen
Masks imperfections
Moderate durability
Use in higher traffic areas
Ideal for family rooms and dining rooms

Satin Finish

Rich sheen
Requires skilled painter
Easy to clean
High durability
Ideal for kids' rooms

Semi-Gloss Finish

High sheen
Requires skilled painter
High durability
Ideal for kitchens and bathrooms
Commonly used on cabinets, doors and trim

High Gloss Finish

Highest sheen
Requires skilled painter
Easiest finish to clean
Most durable finish
Commonly used on cabinets, doors and trim

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Staging Your Living Room To Sell

Getting ready to sell your home? A well-staged living room allows potential buyers to picture themselves in the space. The following tips can help your living room make a great first impression.

Light It Up

Make the most of the natural light in your living room by swapping out dark curtains for lightweight, sheer panels. Use lamps and dimmers to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere.

Less Is More

While a few coordinated, well-placed accessories can make a great impression, too many can make your living room feel cluttered and even chaotic. Scan the space with an objective eye, and remove excess items from shelves, table tops and other furniture.

Make Space

It's a common misconception that pushing furniture to the walls of the room will make the space feel larger. In reality, you can open up a room by pulling furniture away from the walls to create smaller conversational groupings. Arrange your furnishings to make a clear traffic pattern with unobstructed room to walk.

Add Interest

Neutral colors are typically a good choice when getting your house ready to sell, but don't be afraid to add interest with pops of bright colors. Consider adding painted accent furniture, bright throw pillows or a vibrant painting to liven up your living room and add interest for potential buyers.

Remove Pets

Regardless of how much they love animals, buyers will be put off by odors, stains, animal hair, as well as the pets themselves. Make plans to take your animals away from the property when showings are scheduled. In addition, take time to thoroughly clean the areas where pets regularly hang out and hide any pet beds, toys, litter boxes, food dishes, etc.

Freshen Up

Think about adding some house plants to your living room decor to give the space a fresh, cheerful vibe.

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White Chocolate & Peppermint Bark

Directions

Line a baking pan with parchment paper or a silicone mat. Chop **1 (8 oz.) white chocolate bar** and melt in a microwave or on your stove top, stirring frequently. Once melted, stir in **2 drops peppermint oil or extract**. Place **4 peppermint candy canes** in a plastic bag. Using a rolling pin, break candy into a crushed-ice consistency. Reserve **2 Tbsp. crushed candy canes** and set aside. Mix remaining pieces into chocolate. Pour into baking pan and top with reserved candy cane pieces. Let sit at room temperature for 2 hours or in fridge for 30 minutes. Using your hands, break apart the bark. Store in an air-tight container for up to 2 weeks.



Yields 20-30 pieces

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