

Brought to you by
Jill C. Kline & Brenda K. Odenbaugh

Owners
Jill: 970-388-2926
jill@kandorealty.com
Brenda: 970-381-1169
brenda@kandorealty.com
www.kandorealty.com



K & O
REALTY, LLC

P.O. Box 1103
607 Main St
Platteville, CO 80651

HOMEOWNER'S — UPDATE —

Pick the Best Flooring for Your Home

Whether you're remodeling a room or building a home from the ground up, flooring sets the tone. It affects not only the look, but also the feel, function and comfort of your space. But with so many options, where do you start? Here are some factors to consider.

What's your budget?

Hardwood, tile and carpet are traditional options, but they often come with a higher price tag. Updated vinyl and laminate floor coverings are cost-effective alternatives that are durable and strikingly similar in appearance to hardwood and tile.

Where will it live?

Tile and vinyl perform well in rooms with higher moisture levels, like bathrooms and laundry rooms. When a room's average temperature runs cold, carpet can provide extra warmth and coziness. In contrast, a tile floor provides a cooling effect.

What's your maintenance preference?

Laminate and vinyl are easier to clean and maintain than hardwood or tile. In areas with harsher climates, engineered or waterproof hardwood may perform better than traditional hardwood. A tough, low-maintenance material can make clean-up easier if you have kids or pets. Carpet is always a cozy choice but typically requires more upkeep, though stain-resistant varieties can help. Be sure to consider your cleaning habits: do you prefer vacuuming, mopping or scheduling professional cleanings?

How do you want it to look?

Consider the overall style of your home — modern, rustic, classic, or eclectic — and choose flooring that complements your vision. Bottom line: Pick what feels right, looks right and works right for you and your household.

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Fall Warm Ups for Your Hearth

Bring the beauty of fall into your hearth and home with these simple seasonal decorating ideas.

Autumn Bounty

Enhance your fireplace by embracing seasonal products like pumpkins, gourds, and unshelled nuts

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such as walnuts and pecans. Arrange these items across your mantle or hearth, use larger pieces as bookends or add fall fruits and vegetables to create an eye-catching centerpiece.

Seasonal Flowers

Fresh and dried flowers can create an elegant mantle display. Arrange pampas grass, sunflowers, marigolds, asters, or zinnias for a bold and rich presentation. Use neutral vases like black, beige or white to bring the colors of your blooms to life.

Rich Colors

Autumn is known for its dynamic hues, from warm oranges and reds to deep browns and greens. For a fall-centric feel, try incorporating items like earth-tone candles, metallic candlestick holders and leather-bound books.

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Prevent Pet Escapes with Tech

Scroll through any neighborhood social app, and you'll quickly see there are a lot of escape-artist pets out there. Fortunately, modern technology can keep your furry friends secure in your yard and track them if they make a break for it.

Smart collars connect to mobile devices to monitor a pet's location and activity. You can set up safe zones and get immediate alerts if the pet leaves those areas. In the event your pet takes an unauthorized walkabout, the collar's GPS function can pinpoint their location. This is also a great safety feature for use where off-leash outings are allowed.

Invisible fences use underground wires that connect to a transmitter, which sends a brief static impulse to a special collar when a pet is about to breach the perimeter. Experts recommend training pets using above-ground flags so they can see the actual boundaries.

Cameras and monitors placed around the house let you check on your pets when they aren't in the line of sight. Some even feature two-way audio so you can interact with your four-legged friends remotely.

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Housewarming Gifts that Wow the Heart

Want to be fondly remembered long after the housewarming party ends? Here's a guide packed with popular ideas new homeowners will love.

Cozy Candles and Throws

A luxurious candle or chunky knit blanket adds instant warmth and charm.

Fuss-Free Houseplants

Low-maintenance greenery, like a money tree, brings life and freshness to any new space.

Personalized Accessories

Custom doormats or address stamps show thoughtfulness and help new owners feel truly at home.

Entertaining Essentials

Elegant cheese boards, festive drinkware or party games are fitting and fun for those who like to host in-home gatherings.

Outdoor Play

A pickleball set or cornhole game creates instant backyard bonding.

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Farmhouse Baked Apples

Ingredients

½ cup old fashioned oats
5 Tbsp. chopped pecans
5 Tbsp. roughly chopped raisins (or other dried fruit)
5 Tbsp. brown sugar
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
3 Tbsp. butter, melted
4 large baking apples
½ lemon
1 cup apple cider

Directions

Preheat the oven to 375° F. In a medium bowl, combine oats, pecans, raisins, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and butter. Stir until well mixed.

Core apples, scooping out just enough for a 1½-inch wide cavity. Squeeze a bit of lemon juice inside each apple. Place on a baking pan and fill with oat mixture. Pour cider into bottom of pan.

Bake for 45–60 minutes. Baste apples with liquid from bottom of pan several times while baking. Serve hot.



Don't core through bottoms of apples or the filling will leak out into pan.



Serves 4

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The Personal Marketing Company
11541 W. 83rd Terrace
Lenexa, KS 66214