



BRIGHT IDEAS — and — SMART CHOICES

Living Right in a Winter Wonderland

Mosby
BUILDING ARTS THE ART OF LIVING



IMPROVE YOUR MOOD...

Come fall and winter, daylight hours shrink, and the sun too often hides behind rain and snow clouds. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is often a real concern, and is caused by reduced levels of sunlight. So, how do you go from SAD to glad? These home improvement ideas can genuinely brighten your mood:

SKYLIGHTS Place them in your kitchen or living room to bring daylight into your home – even on cloudy days. You can also reduce your electric bill because artificial light is used less during the day (and boost your Vitamin D levels!).

SOLAR TUBES They look similar to flush-mount lights in the ceiling and can be installed where skylights can't – even in your shower!

LIGHTING You need a daily quota of light for a good mood. Add new layers of illumination in your home with task, reading and ambient lighting.

GET MOVING Physical activity boosts your endorphins, so create an exercise space or yoga room for when you can't be outside.



COLOR It's scientifically proven that color enhances mood. To counteract gray months, paint the rooms you use the most in bright, optimistic shades.

Fall and winter are also a good time for indoor home improvement and decorating projects, so keep busy by painting the living room, organizing closets or making new throw pillows for the bedroom. Whatever you choose, try to involve happy colors that will brighten your mood.



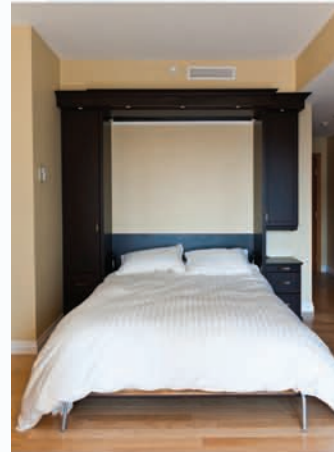
ROOM FOR YOUR HOLIDAY GUESTS

The increased number of people coming to - and staying in - your home for the holidays is a temporary situation. You can create flexible spaces in your home without undertaking a major remodeling project. Here are some useful ideas for making flex space.

WHERE WILL EXTRA HOUSE GUESTS SLEEP?

If you've exhausted all the guest bedrooms – or don't have one – placing a daybed in your dining room can be both practical and beautiful.

The old fashioned Murphy Bed makes good sense in modern times. It's artfully disguised and out of the way by day, and instantly ready for slumber by night!



WHERE WILL THEY SIT? AND DINE?

When you've used up every square foot of space indoors, take it outside! Your outdoor living areas work in the fall and winter when you add fire pits or outdoor space heaters. Use fabric panels or folding room dividers to block wind, which also creates the illusion of a room. At night, illuminate it with candles and strings of light for coziness. Now you've created a new spot for lounging or dining.



IS YOUR HOME READY FOR...

The holidays are traditionally about family and friends celebrating together. If they'll be coming to your place, how ready is your home? Because the holidays seem to arrive quickly, here's what can be realistically achieved within a short time frame:

WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

- Fresh coats of paint or wallpaper in the most-used rooms
- New kitchen countertops, flooring or lighting
- Update a hall bathroom or powder room that guests use most often
- Install new carpeting or tile flooring
- Install new fireplace mantle, trim and molding

WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED IN THE NEW YEAR?

Big projects like a full kitchen, master bath remodel or a finished basement typically require 2 – 3 months of planning and design before construction begins. Please beware of promises to do the impossible in a short period of time, especially in the weeks leading up to the holidays.

The holidays are the perfect time to pay close attention to how your home performs when filled with many guests and activities. Areas to analyze include:

- Is there good flow from room to room?
- How many people can comfortably be in the kitchen at one time?
- What kitchen layout would make food preparation more efficient for you?
- Is there enough storage and organization to suit your needs?

If you keep track of the answers to these questions, you will have a working list of problems that can be solved while working with a design team after the start of the New Year.



WINTER HIBERNATION

The days are shorter; the weather is colder, so here are some ideas for making the most of your increased time indoors:

STORAGE SOLUTIONS

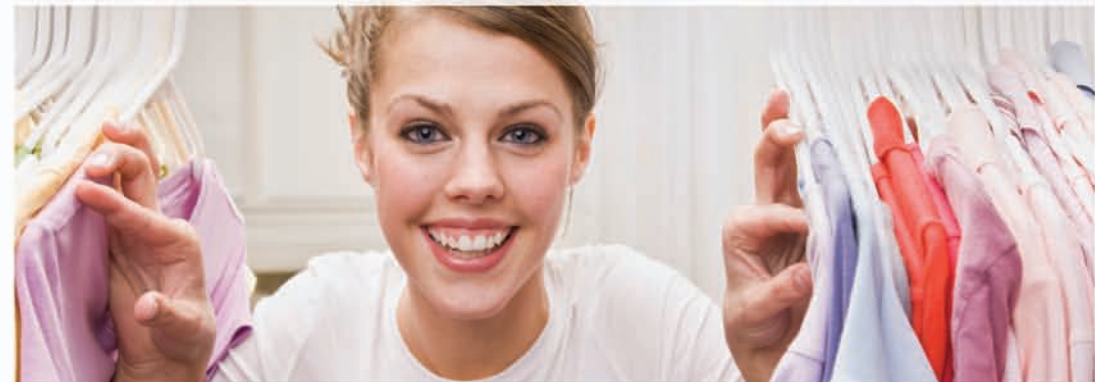
Getting organized is a popular New Year's Resolution. How do you make the most of every inch, and do it with style? Great ideas include:

- Under-stair storage
- Closet organizing systems
- Floor to ceiling bookcases
- Built-in media center
- Overhead storage areas in the garage

WELCOME TO THE MAN CAVE

We will try to say this delicately... his signed Michael Jordan poster cannot be the focal point of your living room, but it can be the center piece of his very own room.

A Man Cave is a place specially reserved for uniquely male activities and possessions, and is a great place for him to "hibernate" during the winter sports season. Turn an unused space or room into a private clubhouse within your home. Let a giant flat-screen TV be the focal point and he may let others use it for a Superbowl party!



ENJOYING THE WINTER

HOW TO BE COMFORTABLE IN YOUR HOME

On the first cold and windy day, we become very aware of any drafts coming from the outside, or places in the home that just never seem to warm up right.

I FEEL A DRAFT When you feel cold air coming through a window, you may think replacement windows. But it may be air gaps around the window.

THIS ROOM IS COLD When one room in your house is colder than the others, you may think about increasing insulation. But it could be an unbalanced HVAC system or a closed damper.

MY HEATING BILLS ARE OUTRAGEOUS When you're spending a lot for a minimum of comfort, you may think about a bigger furnace. But it could be air leaks or inadequate insulation.

HOW DO I LEARN THE TRUTH? A home energy audit is the smart and cost-effective way to learn about the weak spots in your home. Find a certified energy auditor to perform tests, analyze problems, and provide options to improve the comfort and energy efficiency of your home.

It's best to find the real cause rather than pay for something you may not need. Testing will ensure you're spending wisely on long-term solutions.

COLD WEATHER SAFETY

- Secure stair railings
- Increase outdoor lighting for better visibility
- Clean gutters to avoid ice damming
- Seal concrete for easier snow & ice removal
- Or consider a heated driveway to avoid shoveling altogether!



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AFTER THE HOLIDAYS... IT'S TIME TO RELAX

Months of planning, juggling and shopping... the holidays can be stressful, right? With all the parties, cooking and traveling behind you, you have earned the right to relax!

The New Year is traditionally about unwinding and creating quality time to rest, relax and stay healthy. Stress can compromise your immune system during cold and flu season, so it's important to pamper yourself for good health.

START NEW YEAR'S WITH A RELAXING ENVIRONMENT

- An air tub is a therapeutic way to relax at the end of a day
- Scent affects mood – place aromatic candles, herbs and flowers around your home
- Music soothes the soul - a whole-house audio system brings tunes to wherever you are
- Mood lighting – a home automation system controls lights and blinds with the touch of a remote



HOLD DOWN THE FORT WHILE WINTER VACATIONING

Getting away during January and February is traditionally known as a Winter Holiday. If travel is on your agenda, here's ideas on keeping your home safe while you're away:

- Programmable locks make it easy for those checking on your home while you're away
- Programmable thermostats control the temperature while protecting your utility bills
- Light timers give the impression you're home at night
- Consider a fully integrated wireless system that controls every item listed above, and all from your smart phone!
- And remember to hold mail & newspaper deliveries

