

# your home

*Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers*

## color YOUR WORLD

With autumn just around the corner, you want to give your home a fresh look for the season. *Better Homes and Gardens* reports that brushing on a new coat of paint is an obvious first step, but by adding small splashes of color to your home's exterior, you can improve curb appeal and entice buyers to walk through your door.

If you don't have the time or the budget to repaint the entire

exterior, focus on one or two areas, such as the front door, window trim or the roof. Look for doors that come ready to be painted and choose high-quality acrylic latex paint. If your budget allows, decorative glass inserts add more visual interest, and often complement a range of housing styles.

Painting the roof can often make a big impact on your home's overall look. For best results, choose a

tone in the same color family as the home's paint or siding color, or pick a color that's close to the hues in the brick or mortar.

Don't feel like painting? Changing out the hardware and lighting in your front entrance — from the door knockers and house numbers to the porch lights and mailbox — adds character to your home's appearance, while plants such as coleus and big-root geraniums are lower-cost and colorful options for your landscaping. These plants also thrive in shady areas and are easy to care for.

With a little creativity, you can turn your home into a neighborhood show-stopper.

## FALL TUNE-UP CHECKLIST

Homeownership comes with its share of routine seasonal tasks and chores. But keeping track of what needs to be done — and when — can be a challenge. To help homeowners stay on top of their maintenance projects, home improvement retailer Lowe's offers easy-to-follow checklists for each season of the year and covers both inside and outside chores. Get your home ready for fall and winter with these tasks:

### Indoor Tasks:

- When you turn clocks back, change the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Install weatherstripping where needed around the windows.
- Have the furnace professionally inspected.
- If needed, set traps for rodents.
- Dust blinds and vacuum curtains throughout the house.
- Clean kitchen and bathroom cabinets and throw away outdated food, medicine and cosmetics.
- Change or clean furnace filters. Consult the manufacturer's instructions to determine how frequently the filters should be replaced.
- Clean kitchen appliances inside and out, including refrigerator coils.
- Maintain clean drains by adding one-half cup of baking soda followed by one-half cup white vinegar. After 10 minutes, flush with boiling water.

### Outdoor Tasks:

- Clean gutters and downspouts.
- Inspect the roof and chimney for cracks and damage, and have them repaired.
- Rake and shred leaves to use as mulch or dispose of them.
- Close or install storm windows.
- Remove hoses from spigots and drain, and store indoors, coiled and flat.
- Store outdoor furniture and cushions.
- Walk around the house to check for open crawl space vents and close them before cooler temperatures set in.
- Cover your central air conditioning unit, and remove and store window air conditioners.
- Clean and store garden tools.





# BEST PLACES FOR **millennials**

Young adults looking for their first home can look no further than Austin, Texas, and Salt Lake City. These two locations were identified as top places for millennials to settle down due to having a large young-adult population, solid job-growth rates and relatively affordable home prices, according to a new study by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR). Eight of the 10 metro areas recognized are in the Midwest and West, including Dallas, Denver, Des Moines, Grand Rapids, Minneapolis, Seattle, New Orleans and Ogden (Utah).

The homeownership rate for young adults under age 35 peaked at 43 percent in 2005 and has fallen steadily since then to 36 percent in the first quarter of 2014, NAR reports. Limited job prospects, student debt and flat wage growth

combined with tight credit conditions and low inventory have priced millennials out of housing markets like New York and San Francisco, and they are moving to other metro areas that offer strong job growth and where homeownership is more attainable.

NAR President Steve Brown says inevitable life changes will prompt young adults to pursue homeownership in the coming years. “Millennials will eventually settle down, trade their roommates for spouses and want to raise a family,” he says. “As long as median income continues to support purchasing power in most areas, the demand and opportunity will be there for millennials to purchase their first home with guidance and insights from a REALTOR®.”

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