

YOUR HOME

SEPTEMBER
2013

TIPS AND TRENDS FOR HOMEOWNERS, BUYERS AND SELLERS



CLEAN SWEEP

You want to roll out of the red carpet for potential buyers — not a dirty one. Consider these tips from Martha Stewart for keeping your carpets in tiptop shape this season and every season.

- Shoes track in most of the dust and dirt. This buildup can create foul odors and trigger asthma attacks. For starters, position doormats at entrances, ask visitors to take off their shoes and make vacuuming part of your weekly routine.
- Invest in a quality vacuum that has a green label called High-Efficiency Particular Air, which keeps all dirt in the bag. Add ¼ cup of baking soda to the bag to make carpet odors less noticeable. Switch the bag when it is half-full.
- When liquids or other messes hit the carpet, act quickly with a solution of clear hand soap or white vinegar and water. Gently blot the spill from the edge to the center with a towel. Rubbing cements a stain and causes matting. Blot until the carpet is completely dry.
- Professional cleaning will extend the life of carpets. The Environmental Protection Agency recommends a professional cleaning at least twice a year and even more frequently if you have pets or small children.

SHOW TIME

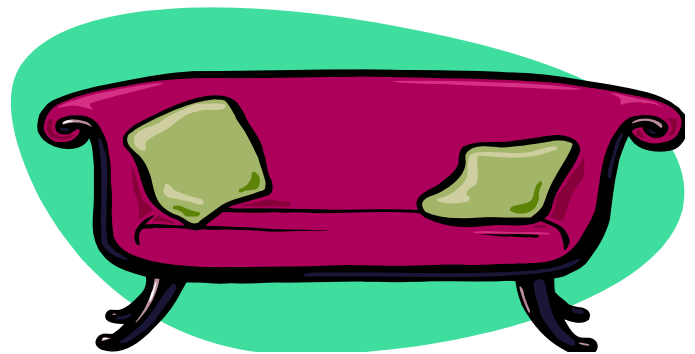
End-of-summer sales on patio furniture might be front and center, but it might be just the right time to invest in new indoor chairs, couches or tables. Take a seat and learn how to prepare with tips from *Better Homes and Gardens*.

Do your homework. First, measure everything. Write down room dimensions, accounting for the door and other details of the space. Also, have an idea of what you like. Get inspiration from home décor magazines and online research. But, remember, you will need to touch, sit and even lift furniture before deciding if you should bring it home.

Ask yourself the right questions. What is the purpose and function of the furniture? Is comfort or aesthetic the priority? It may help to bring to the store the measurements, photos of the room and magazine pages so that you can refer to them while you're shopping.

Pay attention to detail. Check the cushions and stitching. Run your fingers over the woodwork and finish. Take time to examine every detail. Make sure that the furniture piece is exactly what you are looking for.

Don't settle. If you aren't sold on a piece, don't get it. Every detail should be perfect. Many stores now even have a custom design division. Still feel overwhelmed? Ask your CRS REALTOR® for an interior designer referral.



fast fact >> >> >> >> >> >> >> >>

Every year, Americans eat an average of 49.8 pounds each of fresh and processed apple product.



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There's an app for that." Tired of hearing that phrase? Well, don't knock it just yet. When you're shopping for a home, you'll want to know the apps that will lead you to the next open house. Consider these tips from AOL Real Estate and CNET.

For starters, real estate websites, such as **Zillow**, **Redfin** and **Trulia**, have free apps with many of the sites' functions. You can search

addresses, contact REALTORS®, and find the estimated value of homes.

Homesnap (iOS, free) is another tool on the scene. Take a photo within the app when you're passing by a home to get the list price, square footage, number of bedrooms, heating and air conditioning systems, local schools and estimated taxes.

If you're looking for a home in a specific area, try the **REALTOR.com Real Estate App** (Android, iOS; free) Area Highlighter feature. You can customize the search area by drawing the boundaries directly on the map.

And once you've started your search, keep track of the houses and wish list features you like with **CrumbTracks** (iOS, \$1.99). Create files—with notes and photos—for each one.

The **Home Buying Power app** (iOS, \$1.99) can help you calculate your down payment, ideal monthly payment, closing costs and more.

And, if you're just looking to do some home improvements, there's an app for that, too. Try **Photo Measures** (iOS, \$5.99), which gives you accurate dimensions of rooms and lets you include design notes.

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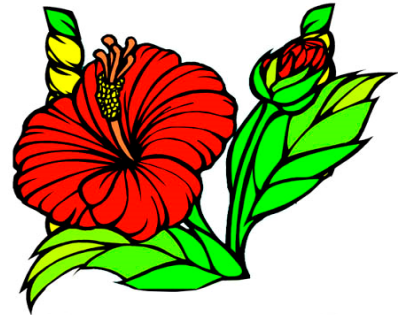
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Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home? Please mention my name.

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