

Spring 2024

# Home & Garden



A supplement of the **Journal Review**

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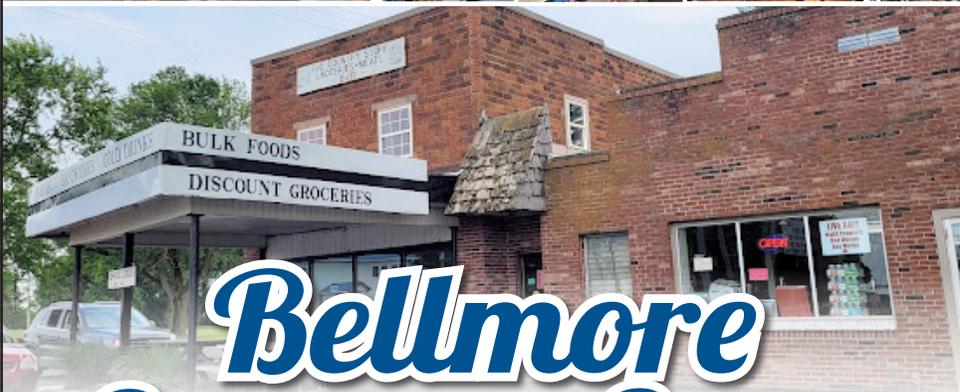


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# Bye-bye, clutter!

Simple, effective storage solutions



Are you tired of having to tiptoe around piles of stuff in your home? Here are a few tips to help you organize and find a place for all your belongings so you can enjoy a clutter-free home:

•Wardrobe organization systems. You can find various practical and affordable solutions for intelligently storing your clothing and accessories at local hardware and big-box stores, including hooks, shelves, shoe racks, bins and more. The possibilities are endless!

•Multifunctional furniture for the living room. If you're in the market for a new coffee table, look for one with drawers and compartments that can be used to store items like the TV remote or video

game controllers. Additionally, some ottomans double as hidden storage for things like magazines and throw blankets. Lastly, keep an eye out for sofa beds that come with drawers for extra storage.

•Bathroom accessories. Store personal hygiene products, like toothbrushes, towels and washcloths in an organized and attractive way using trays with dividers, towel bars, shelves or shower caddies. If you're tight on space, don't hesitate to utilize the walls or even the top of the door to store items you use less frequently.

Visit your local shops for other clever storage solutions.

# The importance of inspecting your roof: how to avoid unpleasant surprises

Every spring, it's a good idea to inspect your roof to see if it withstood the winter months. This will help you identify any problems and take necessary action. Here's what you need to know when doing a thorough visual inspection of your roof.

## SAFETY FIRST

Climbing onto your roof can be risky. Ensure you use appropriate safety equipment, including closed-toe, non-slip shoes, a sturdy ladder and a safety harness. Having someone help you stabilize the ladder and be available in an emergency is also a good idea.

Additionally, ensure the roof is dry before inspecting it. Choose a day with minimal wind and cool temperatures to avoid working on a screaming hot surface.

## THINGS TO CHECK

First, remove any debris, such as leaves.

Then, inspect all accessible parts of the roof to identify problems such as:

- Standing water
- A damaged or deformed membrane
- An uneven gravel layer
- Cracked sealing joints
- Rusted or flimsy flashing
- Protruding nails
- Missing, broken or lifted shingles
- Mold

It's also a good idea to examine your attic, walls and ceilings while you're at it. Check for signs of water infiltration or poor ventilation. Unpleasant odors, mold, excessive moisture and peeling paint are telltale signs that something's amiss.

If you notice an issue, don't wait for it to worsen. Seek professional help. If you're uncomfortable inspecting your roof, call a local roofing professional to get the most accurate assessment of your roof's condition.



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# Shut the door on pests this spring!

As the weather warms up, many insects and animals come out of hiding, looking for a place to live or raise their young.

## SPECIES

Pests to look out for in spring include small mammals like skunks, ground-hogs, raccoons, squirrels and mice. These small but mighty critters can cause damage to your home and yard.

Birds, such as swallows and sparrows, can also build nests in inconvenient places, such as your eavestroughs or attic. During the spring thaw, ants, wasps and other insects can also become an issue.

## RISKS

Depending on the species involved, pest infestations can lead to various consequences. Some risks include:

- Structural damage
- Fires
- Contaminated food
- Allergic reactions to insect bites
- Animal-related diseases

## SOLUTIONS

You can do several things to prevent a pest infestation, including keeping the inside of your home clean, regularly emptying the trash, storing food in airtight containers, repairing cracks, replacing damaged weatherstrip, placing screens over vents and trimming overhanging tree branches. Additionally, it's a good idea to trim overgrown bushes or hedges to eliminate nesting places for rodents.

If pests are still getting into your home despite your best efforts, call a local pest control expert to address the issue. Professionals can quickly and effectively relocate troublesome animals and exterminate unwanted insects.



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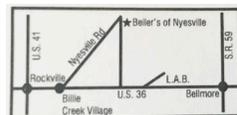
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### Invite home automation into your garden!

Home automation is a modern technology that allows you to control various systems in your home using your smartphone. It's an efficient way to save energy and money. If you have a garden, it's a great idea to consider home automation for optimizing plant watering and conserving drinking water.

How does it work?

Using a watering timer and several sophisticated sensors and algorithms, the system detects numerous data points and variables in real time, such as soil moisture and weather. Based on these readings, the system can adjust the irrigation in your garden to provide your plants with the pre-

cise amount of water they need, and only when they need it. This means no more wasting water.

Moreover, you can also program the system to water your plants at the best times, such as early in the morning. Depending on the system you choose, you may be able to connect it to other sensors, such as a sunlight sensor and your rainwater collector or well. This allows you to set up personalized watering programs for different areas of your yard.

Talk to local home automation companies to learn more about designing a connected and sustainable garden.



## Lighting options to brighten your yard!



There are endless options when it comes to outdoor lighting. Halogen or LED? Electric or solar? Here are a few ideas to help you make the right choice.

### Bulbs

Each type of bulb has its advantages. LED bulbs are renowned for their durability. Plus, you'll end up saving on replacement costs. They also consume up to 75 percent less electricity than halogen bulbs. However, halogen bulbs give off more heat, which can melt the snow around your trees in winter and save you some time and effort shoveling.

### Power

One big question remains: is it better to opt for lights that run on electricity

or solar energy? Here's a quick comparison:

- Electric lights are affordable and reliable. However, they require more equipment, and it can be hard to hide the cables.
- Solar lights are practical, removable and low maintenance. However, the light's intensity is weak and limited to the amount of sunlight the fixture receives during the day.

You'll also need to consider the characteristics of your yard, the slope and the visual effect you want to achieve. Not sure which product to choose? Talk to a landscaping professional for enlightenment.

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# Factors to consider when planting the right tree in the right place

Are you thinking of planting a tree or multiple trees on your property? Whether you select the location or the tree first, there are certain factors you need to consider to ensure the tree survives and thrives. Here are a few:

- **Tree characteristics.** You must consider various aspects of the tree, including its height, width, shape, type, color of the leaves, flowering habits and other characteristics that suit the available space and match your preferences.

- **Soil type.** Different tree species have specific soil preferences. You must determine if your soil is dry, damp, sandy or loamy and choose a tree that will grow well in those conditions.

- **Surroundings.** If your yard has a swimming pool, vegetable garden, parking area or power lines, it will influence your choice of tree species and location. For example, you don't want a tree whose fruit will fall on your car or the neighbor's property or that will eventually shade your vegetable garden.

- **Sunlight.** The amount of sunlight your planting site receives and the amount required by the tree species is another important factor.

- **Local regulations.** Some cities and towns have specific requirements regarding the species planted and the location.

- **Hardiness zone.** Choose a species that can survive in your region's hardiness zone, or it may not make it through the winter.

Don't hesitate to consult your local plant nursery to make an informed decision.



**GOOD TO KNOW**

The Arbor Day Foundation has put together a Tree Guide with various resources to help you decide which tree to plant in your yard. For more information, visit [arborday.org/treeguide](http://arborday.org/treeguide).

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# Dark basement: 6 bright ideas to liven it up

Is your basement dark and gloomy? Here are a few clever tips to shine some light on the situation:

1. Use thin, full-length curtains. Sheer, lightweight curtain fabrics allow light to pass through while adding texture to your space. Long curtains can help create the illusion of bigger windows. Use wide curtain rods mounted close to the ceiling to help accentuate this sense of grandeur.

2. Multiply your light sources. In addition to overhead lights, invest in floor lamps, table lamps and wall sconces to brighten up your space. Recessed ceiling or floor lights are also worth considering.

3. Opt for reflective materials. Consider a glossy stretch ceiling, polished concrete floors or metallic accessories, such as gold frames, to help maximize light reflection.

4. Choose light colors. Light shades are a great option whether on the walls, ceilings, floors or furniture. In addition to reflecting light, they help visually enlarge the space. Choose a contrasting color for the walls to make the ceiling appear higher.

5. Install mirrors. Whether practical or decorative, mirrors are unparalleled when it comes to reflecting light.

6. Use glass partitions. Glass doors and partitions are ideal for dividing your space without compromising brightness. Use textured or frosted glass to add a bit of privacy.

Visit your local stores for inspiration and to find everything you need to transform your basement into a bright and inviting space.



## Is it time to replace your toilet?

Is your toilet showing its age? Are you thinking about investing in a new one? Are you renovating your bathroom and want to update this essential fixture? Beyond aesthetic considerations, here are some telltale signs it might be time for a new commode:

- The toilet leaks or is frequently clogged.
- The flush mechanism works erratically despite attempts at repairing it.
- There are cracks in the porcelain bowl or tank.
- The water tank runs continuously.
- The toilet is unstable and moves when you sit on it.
- The seat is uncomfortable. Modern models feature elongated bowls, which provide more support and comfort than round seats.
- The plumber visits so often that you've become friends.

If your toilet is past its prime, you may want to consider swapping it for a low-flow model to reduce your water consumption. Has your water bill recently increased? A faulty toilet could be to blame. It may be wise and cost-effective to replace it.

When shopping for a new toilet, it's essential to consider the size and shape of the bowl, as well as the rough-in distance, to ensure you make the right choice.



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## DECOR TRENDS

# In 2024, infuse your home with the spirit of the French Riviera!

The French Riviera interior design trend has been gaining popularity in recent years. This style combines a variety of influences, such as bohemian, Mediterranean, retro and art deco, to create an elegant yet unpretentious look. Are you planning to re-vamp the decor in one of the rooms of your home? If so, here's an overview of the essential elements of this sunlit style you should consider.

- **Materials.** French Riviera decor is a perfect blend of sophistication and simplicity. It incorporates elements such as rattan, wicker, marble, brass, raw pale wood, wrought iron, plaster, ceramic and stone, each chosen carefully to enhance the overall design with texture and depth. The preferred textiles used in this style are linen and cotton.

- **Accessories.** Key aspects of this style include macrame such as plant hangers, wall-mounted plates, works that evoke

the sea like photos and canvases, colorful dishware, hand-painted ceramics, reproductions of works by famous artists inspired by the Côte d'Azur like Matisse, and fringed decorations.

- **Colors.** White is undoubtedly the star color of the French Riviera trend. Stripes are also a must in this style, with the Mediterranean blue and white combo being a classic choice. Earthy colors such as terracotta and bright shades like lemon-yellow and orange represent this trend.

Lastly, this style utilizes columns, alcoves and niches to their fullest potential. The latter is perfect for showcasing handcrafted objects or plants, including living greenery and dried flowers.

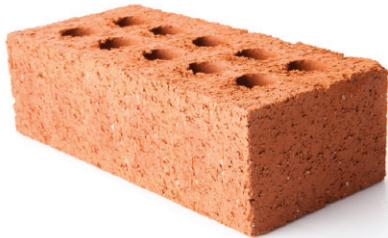
If you're looking for a style to make you feel like you're on holiday all year round, visit your local home decor stores to bring the French Riviera trend into your home!



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