

Compliments of Cheryl Ginn

Good to Be

issue 20

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An Older-Home **Buying Guide**

*Make the most of your
investment when buying an
older home* | PAGE 8



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Front of Tear Out Card 1

Carrot cake

Cake Ingredients

- 1½ c. sugar
- ¾ c. oil
- 3 eggs
- 3 c. finely grated carrots
- ½ c. flour
- ¾ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ¾ tsp. cinnamon

Frosting Ingredients

- 3 (8-oz. packages) cream cheese, softened
- 2 sticks butter, softened
- 6 c. powdered sugar
- 2 tsp. vanilla



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Back of Tear Out Card 1



Carrot cake

At this time of year, we love our carrot cake—and not just because of a certain bunny. It's a moist, dense treat topped with cream cheese that is a wonderful way to celebrate the return of spring itself!

Carrot Cake

Set oven to 350°F. Prepare baking pans by spreading shortening and heavily dusting with flour; set aside.

Mix together the sugar and the oil. Add the eggs, and mix again until smooth. Add the carrots, and stir.

Combine all dry ingredients in a separate bowl, and add to the carrot mixture.

Pour mixture into two prepared 8" baking pans.

Bake 25-30 minutes. Let cool on a cooling rack for 10 minutes, and then remove from pan. Add cream cheese frosting after cake is completely cool.

Cream Cheese Frosting

Combine cream cheese and butter on medium-high until mixture is well blended and fluffy, about 1-2 minutes.

Reduce speed to low, and slowly blend in powdered sugar.

Increase speed to medium, and beat well until smooth, about 1-2 minutes.



Dear Bill and Judy,

Change can be an intimidating yet exciting part of life, especially when it comes to your living environment. Whether you're weighing the choice to move somewhere new or longing for more organized and stylish rooms, this issue of Good to Be Home has you covered. It includes a guide to buying and selling at the same time, easy ideas for refreshing your bookshelves, and tips to transform your rooms by rearranging furniture and redecorating.

If you're planning your next move, you're probably laser-focused on finding the perfect home for yourself and your family. But there's another important part of the puzzle: selling your current one. Inside you'll find a breakdown of the dual buying-selling process, including answers to some of the most common questions.

Spring is the perfect time to breathe life into your home by removing as much clutter as possible, and reorganizing and styling your bookshelves is an easy place to start. Check out the enclosed article for giving these shelves a refresh.

You don't necessarily have to embark on a large-scale project to give your home a new look. Learn how rearranging furniture and investing in new decor can completely change your spaces.

How will you embrace change in your home in the months ahead? As always, it's a pleasure to send you this magazine.

Keep me in mind when you have questions regarding Medicare! Always happy to help!

Cherilyn Ginn (GiGi)
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seasonal GRILL PREP

written by: MATTHEW BRADY



Ignite all the burners for ten to thirty minutes to soften any gunk on the grates.



Clean the grates with a grill brush dipped in water.



Brush in the direction of the gas slits, not perpendicular to them, to avoid clogging them further.

Barbecue season is here! Before you fire up your gas grill for the first time, though, you need to make sure it's properly prepared for the upcoming months.

INSPECT IT

Test for leaks using this tried-and-true method: connect your tank to your grill, turn the tank on, and add soapy water to the valve and hose. If you see bubbles, gas is escaping, a situation that you'll need to address. Also, be on the lookout for bugs, especially in the burner tubes.

CLEAN IT THOROUGHLY

You'll likely find this process easier by going in sections.

Interior hood

Start by washing the inside of your grill's hood with a mix of dish soap and water; it can have a surprising amount of debris and grease.

Grates

Ignite all the burners for ten to thirty minutes to soften any gunk on the grates. Turn your grill off, grab your

grill mitt, and clean the grates with a grill brush dipped in water. (If it's a wire brush, make sure to inspect the grates after for dislodged wires.)

Flavorizer bars and burner tubes

Let your grill cool thoroughly. Then remove the burner-protecting bars and brush the debris into the bottom of the grill or the trash. For the burner tubes, brush in the direction of the gas slits, not perpendicular to them, to avoid clogging them further. Also, ensure that no tubes have rust or holes.

Grease pan and drip tray

With everything now removed but the burners, thoroughly clean your grill's interior. Take out the grease pan below, trashing loose debris and scraping anything that has hardened onto the pan with a putty knife. Wash the pan with soapy water or a solution of equal parts water and white vinegar. Clean the smaller drip tray—which collects your grill's grease—the same way (though if there's a lot of grease, you'll have to scoop it out first).



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issue 20

how to

NAVIGATE A DUAL-HOME TRANSACTION

written by: BONNIE JOFFE

Buying a new home can be an exciting adventure, but it can also be challenging if you want to sell your current one at the same time. Balancing the complexities of these two transactions requires careful planning, organization, and a clear strategy. Use this guide as your compass for navigating the choppy waters of buying and selling homes simultaneously.

UNDERSTAND THE MARKET CONDITIONS

Conducting dual-market research will arm you with the knowledge you need to make sound real estate decisions. To price your home competitively and attract potential buyers more effectively, you need to know the current trends and property values in your selling market. On the flip side, being well-versed on the area where you're buying will allow you to recognize good deals and negotiate with confidence.



You will also want to explore the neighborhoods in your potential new locale to ensure you choose a location that aligns with your lifestyle and plans.

ASSESS YOUR FINANCES

Your financial situation will play a key role in this process. Determine how much equity you have in your current home, if you need the proceeds from selling it to purchase the next one, and whether you can take care of your down payment and closing costs—each of these factors may impact if it would be better for you to buy or sell first. Should you need to cover the time between buying and selling, consider obtaining a bridge loan to help with short-term financing.

INCLUDE A SALE CONTINGENCY

By sheer nature, simultaneously buying and selling a home means that glitches can occur. These interruptions in the closing process have the potential to manifest in either transaction and from either party. They can include funding problems, last-minute walk-through issues, or unmet contingencies that lead to a holdup in purchasing your next home, initiating a chain reaction and impacting all parties involved.

Incorporating a sale contingency into the contract of your home purchase or sale (or both) can offer a valuable layer of safeguarding. Should the sale of your current home encounter complications, you won't be obligated to



proceed with the purchase of the new property. Similarly, if the acquisition of that new property encounters delays, you won't have to sell your existing property prematurely.

COORDINATE CLOSINGS

If your goal is to have the sale of your old home and the purchase of your new one occur on the same day, discuss the timing with both your prospective buyer and the seller of your new property during the negotiation phase of the transactions. Also, keep in mind that timelines can become unpredictable when you're selling your current home while building a new one. This situation might necessitate backup plans to prepare for unexpected delays in its construction.

One viable option may be to look into arranging back-to-back escrow, in which the proceeds from the sale go directly to the purchase of the new property. This creates a process that minimizes the gap between selling and buying, reducing your chances of carrying two mortgages.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE

Having the right team on your side is essential. Enlist the help of an experienced real estate agent who understands the intricacies of simultaneous transactions. Their expertise will streamline the process and provide you with the necessary support to make informed decisions.



An Older-Home Buying Guide

written by:
BONNIE JOFFE

The term “older home” can be subject to varying interpretations. Though some people may only consider a century-old home an antique, any house built over fifty years ago is generally deemed an older property. However, it’s important to note that a structure’s age doesn’t solely determine its condition. A sixty-year-old home, for example, might have undergone recent renovations to offer modern comforts while retaining its classic charm.



If you are looking to purchase an older home, you’ll need to prepare for the potential hurdles you may encounter, such as outdated systems, hazardous materials, or existing structural issues. Assessing the costs associated with addressing these concerns can help you decide whether the investment required for renovation and modernization aligns with your long-term objectives. Review the following common problems frequently encountered in older homes to be better prepared during your search process.



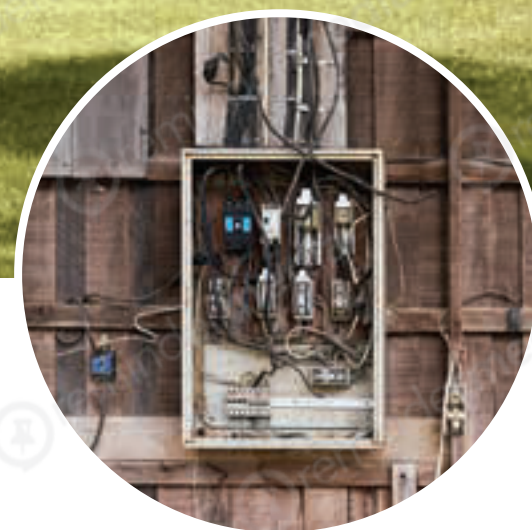
Inadequate **PLUMBING**

Depending on when it was built and if any upgrades were done, an older home can have its share of plumbing issues, which should be checked by a plumber. Some of the problems you may see are cracked, corroded, or leaking pipes, improper water heater installations, poor water quality and pressure, and failing sewer lines.



FOUNDATION *Issues*

Over time, soil movement or tree roots growing beneath the foundation can cause structural problems. Signs of issues include hairline cracks near windows or in the walls or chimney, though these could also be due to normal settling. However, deep cracks, sagging or uneven floors, and windows and doors that do not close properly may indicate more severe problems. An engineer can inspect the house, identify the extent of any potential foundation issues, and suggest remediation options.



Outdated **WIRING**

Knob and tube wiring—copper wires protected by ceramic insulators—is often found in older homes. However, this wiring is typically insufficient for modern electrical needs and may even pose a hazard; updating it to modern standards as outlined by the National Electrical Code will require hiring a licensed electrician. In addition, look out for ungrounded (two-pronged) outlets since they can be a fire risk and limit device connectivity.



Leaky **WINDOWS**

Many older homes have single-paned windows, which lack the sealing effectiveness of newer windows. This can lead to drafts, moisture infiltration, and increased energy consumption. If this is the case for your place, you might need to budget for replacing windows and frames with double-paned or storm versions.



Embarking on the journey of purchasing an older home can evoke a mix of excitement and apprehension. Consult with your real estate agent, who has the expertise to assist you with this endeavor and sort through any complications. They can also recommend a professional inspector to help uncover any issues and provide potential solutions and cost estimates, allowing you to make an informed decision.



Outdated HEATING AND COOLING

Whether it's a home from the early twentieth century that relies on radiators for heat or one with an inefficient HVAC system, upgrading equipment or performing a complete overhaul may be required to meet modern heating and air-conditioning standards.



Deteriorating ROOF

Roofs were typically crafted using wood shingles before the widespread adoption of asphalt versions in the 1930s. These wood shingles were usually placed over purlins, horizontal boards fixed over rafters. In the case of a renovated older home, it's common to find multiple layers of wood shingles on a roof, which could indicate that it's time for replacement. As an extra precaution, you may want to consult a reliable roofing professional to ascertain the roof's condition and the replacement cost, if needed.



Lead-based PAINT

This type of paint was used in most homes until 1978, when it was officially recognized as a health hazard, resulting in a federal law requiring its removal if a child under six is living in the dwelling. However, a previous homeowner may have chosen to paint over it instead, though that is not a proper solution; the lead-based paint could still leech through and negatively impact current occupants. Hence, it is vital to have a home tested for this toxin if it was built before 1978.



ASBESTOS

A flame-retardant material, asbestos was heavily used in the construction and home-building industry from the 1950s to the late 1980s due to its durability and resistance to corrosion, heat, and electricity. It was utilized in products such as concrete, roofing, and flooring materials, pipe insulation, and fireproofing. Ultimately, it was banned by the EPA in 1989 due to its link to serious health issues, including cancer. If you're considering purchasing a home built before then, an inspection for asbestos is crucial.



interview with: NICOLE HURD
written by: LAUREN KIM
photos courtesy of: @JESSICABORDNERPHOTO

a beachfront haven

Nicole Hurd of Hurd Homes in Jupiter, Florida, details how she designed an oceanfront condo in nearby Juno Beach to serve as a comfortable oasis for a couple's combined families.



How would you describe your studio's work?

We focus on neutral and natural interiors, creating for each client a timeless palette with natural textures that reflects our coastal Florida environment. A home is an investment; we want our clients to be able to switch out a pillow and not feel like the whole design has gone wrong.

What influenced you to pursue interior design?

I originally worked for a Fortune 500 company and spent ten years in commercial brand design and marketing. Eventually, I moved back to Jupiter, my hometown. After I renovated my home, I decided I wanted to contribute what I learned from both of those experiences to my community.

Tell us about the Juno Beach project:

This condo is a vacation home and beach retreat for my clients. Like many of my customers, they're snowbirds who fly south for winter—they're here for maybe



**“
The first goal was to create a relaxing getaway, so we brought in some coastal art, including the one over the sofa that depicts a pool.”**

four or five months of the year. They each have children from separate marriages and purchased this condo to be close to the beach and entertain friends and family.

What were the project's main objectives?

The first goal was to create a relaxing getaway, so we brought in some coastal art, including the one over the sofa that depicts a pool. Our second aim was to create multifunctional spaces that would be comfortable for either our clients alone or numerous guests. We made specific choices based on that, such as placing a custom-made console table in the living room that could double as a desk for working from home. Ottomans throughout the space also provide flexible seating.

How did you make the space more functional?

Since sand will likely get tracked in from the beach, we chose durable items like leather ottomans, indoor-outdoor rugs, and performance fabrics. We put long-lasting rugs in the living room, master bedroom, and secondary bedroom because they're great for kids and dogs and are



washable; the dirt comes out easily with a quick spray of detergent.

What inspired the design of the living room?

I wanted it to feel relaxed and inviting with room for play and fun. It has two gray swivel chairs and an off-white ivory sofa with a built-in chaise lounge on one side; the chairs and sofa are covered in durable, easy-to-clean fabric. The coffee table is very cool—it is square and accented with beach reeds that bring in wood tones. We kept the window treatments minimal so we could preserve the view of the ocean and offer indoor-outdoor living.

Tell us about your colorful design choices in the bedrooms:

The color palette for the condo is primarily whites, blues, and greens with rattan. But we wanted each bedroom to have its own personality, so we added extra blues and greens to them, such as on the walls, furniture, and bedding.

The secondary bedroom has a bunk bed, which was a great find since we didn't have the budget to do a built-in one. It's made of a solid alderwood and has a queen bed on the bottom

and a twin on top; we gave it olive bedding to complement the sage walls. We also added two art pieces to the room, one that says “No Wake Zone” and another that reads “On Beach Time.” We had those customized to make them beach specific. The rug, a denim-colored shag indoor-outdoor piece, is great for kids because it’s soft to play on and hides dirt very well.

We kept the main bedroom more minimal, painting it Sherwin-Williams Tradewind blue, and carried the blue palette into the bed’s linen duvet cover and throw pillows and the dresser’s blue linen fabric. The bed itself is made from rattan to contribute to the beach feeling. We brought in ivory nightstands accented with bronze for elegance and hung pendant lights to leave their surfaces clear, then added a small desk so more than one person could work from home. The rug is a woven wool rug, so it’s durable.

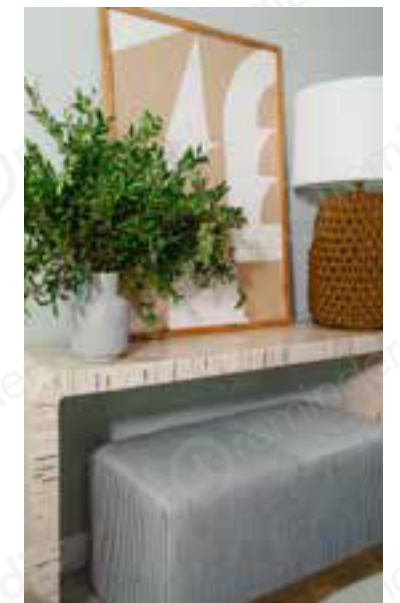
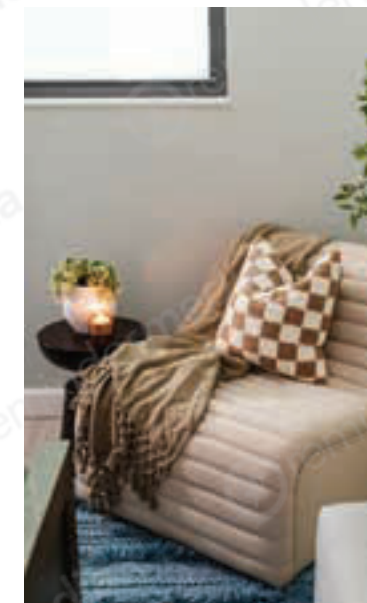
What was your strategy for the balcony?

It’s a relatively small outdoor space, but it’s right off the ocean. It’s also accessible from the living room and main bedroom, so my clients spend a lot of time out there. To make it feel light and airy, we incorporated smaller, space-saving furniture that can easily be rearranged.

How did you coordinate this project with your out-of-town clients?

We did everything remotely and collaborated over Zoom for our presentations, selection reviews, and design decisions. The project completed with an installation and photo shoot over three busy days, during which we thought our paths would eventually cross. Unfortunately, though, our schedules didn’t line up. This was the first time my collaboration with clients was completely remote. But they trusted me to make good choices and were very happy with the results.

For more info, visit [hurdhomesdesign.com](https://www.hurdhomesdesign.com)





REFRESH AND

redecorate your rooms

written by: ANDRE RIOS

You cock your head and shift your sofa an inch or two for the hundredth time. But no matter what you do, something still doesn't work. Maybe you continually stub your toe on an unfortunately placed chair leg, you habitually have to squeeze through an awkward doorway, or your guests are forced to pull chairs from the dining room every time you host.

A subpar furniture layout can make even a new and stylish home feel unsuitable for your lifestyle. Thankfully, there

are easy changes you can make to create breezier, more chic, and more practically arranged spaces. Use these decorating tips to update even your most difficult rooms with a fresh approach.

Back to blueprints

Start at the drawing board. Gather some measuring tape and lined graphing paper, then sketch your best likeness of a troublesome room in your home. Use a consistent scale, such as by making one square on the page equal one square foot in the room. Measure your furniture and larger decor, then add them to the sheet in a possible

rearrangement in pencil, erasing and trying again as needed. For an interactive project, cut out paper representations of your pieces and color-code them. From there, you can easily move pieces around on your blueprint.

Get creative with the different possibilities and arrangements. Swap large pieces, like your sofa or bed, from one wall to another, or face furniture toward windows rather than a TV or coffee table. These steps alone may inspire some surprising solutions to awkward or tired layouts.

Go avant-garde

If you're eager for a big change, flip your current design on its head. To make a larger seating room more eye-catching, embrace the trend of circular arrangements: set furniture in a circle, then lay a round rug in the center to unify the space. Some contemporary designers even boldly place beds in the center of bedrooms and decorate around them.

To wholly distance yourself from a well-worn design, heed the advice from Kristen Fiore of Sacramento-based Kristen Elizabeth Design: use an opposite color palette and bring in furniture in different materials. For example, replace a large fabric sofa with two leatherette armchairs.

Watch your step

Of course, you shouldn't go too wild with your layout at the risk of functionality. When decorating a room, always remember to keep

foot traffic in mind. "You want your room to be accessible and easy to move around in," Fiore says. "Make sure the entry of the room is clear with open passage points to create a sense of welcome." Decorating to optimize foot traffic can also help you avoid awkward shuffling in busy spaces. To see traffic-conscious design in action, check out @DearModern on YouTube, a channel that demonstrates smart layout swaps and offers troubleshooting for complex arrangements like living rooms with multiple entry points.

If you're struggling to redecorate a small space, Fiore recommends that you scale down, reducing to only the most essential furnishings. "Try to use as much of the space as possible," she says. "Mix solid upholstery with seating and tables that offer open external frames." For example, opt for chairs with lean metal arms rather than thick, upholstered ones. Doing so will allow the passage of light and give the illusion of extra space.

Shop smart

If you're willing to invest in some new pieces, this will certainly impact your current layout, so work out your sketches before you start shopping. "Focus on the scale of your furnishings," says Fiore. "You can begin sourcing based on the dimensions of the items in your plan." Remember to take measuring tape and your sketches with you on shopping trips to ensure you always find the perfect fit.



Mix solid upholstery with seating and tables that offer open external frames.

DELIGHTFUL *international fare*



recipes and photography by:
SHIRLEY GARRIER and
MATHIEU ZOUHAIRI



GET THE REST OF
THE COOKBOOK
RECIPES HERE.



New opportunities abound with warmer weather—including for outdoor gatherings with food and drinks. As these tantalizing, travel-inspired recipes from *The Social Food* cookbook illustrate, you don't need to leave home to enjoy worldwide flavors.

© *The Social Food* by Shirley Garrier and Mathieu Zouhairi, Rizzoli New York, 2022. Photographs © Shirley Garrier and Mathieu Zouhairi

ICED WHITE TEA *with peach and almond* Makes 4¼ cups

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup almonds
- 3 peaches
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 4¼ cups mineral water
- 2 teaspoons white tea
- ½ lemon

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Halve the almonds, pit the peaches and roughly chop them.
2. Place in a saucepan with the honey and the water, and heat for 15 minutes over low heat. Remove from the heat.
3. Off the heat, add the tea and infuse 8 minutes.
4. Strain the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a pitcher, set aside to cool, then chill.
5. Enjoy the iced tea with a drizzle of lemon juice.



GORGONZOLA

and walnut anolini | Serves 2

INGREDIENTS:

Dough

- 3¼ cups flour
- 2 pinches salt
- 5 eggs
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

- ½ cup shelled walnuts

Filling

- 10½ ounces gorgonzola (about 2 cups crumbled)
- About 1 cup grated Parmesan
- 7 tablespoons butter

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Combine the flour and the salt in a bowl, and transfer the mixture to a work surface. Form a well in the center. Crack the eggs into the well, and add the olive oil. Knead until the dough is smooth. Form the dough into a ball, cover in plastic wrap, and set aside to rest at room temperature for 1 hour.
2. Roughly chop the walnuts, and arrange them on a baking sheet in an even layer. Bake at 350°F for 6 minutes.
3. Mix the gorgonzola and Parmesan together in a mixing bowl, and season with pepper.
4. Roll out the dough very thin (about ⅛ inch). Divide into two pieces.
5. Place small balls of filling on one of the two pasta sheets, spacing them out about ¼ inch apart. Cover with the other dough half, and cut the anolini with a cookie cutter or anolini cutter.
6. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the anolini in batches for 1 minute. Drain.
7. In a small pan, heat the butter over low heat until foamy. As soon as it stops foaming and takes on a golden color, remove from the heat. Add the anolini and toss well in the browned butter, then sprinkle with the toasted walnuts, and serve.



MISO FLOATING ISLAND

| Serves 2

INGREDIENTS:

Miso custard

- 4 egg yolks
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon white miso
- 2½ cups whole milk

Meringue

- 4 egg whites
- 1 pinch salt
- ⅓ cup + 1¾ tablespoons superfine sugar

Miso caramel

- 2 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 2½ tablespoons sugar
- 4 tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon red miso
- ¾ tablespoon butter
- Sunflower oil

INSTRUCTIONS:

Make the miso custard

1. Separate the eggs, and reserve the whites for the meringue. In a mixing bowl, beat the egg yolks with the sugar and the white miso.
2. Heat the milk in a saucepan until simmering. Pour immediately over the egg yolk mixture, and mix well to combine.
3. Transfer the mixture to the same saucepan, and cook over low heat, mixing all the while, until a thick cream forms.

Make the meringue

4. Beat the reserved egg whites with a pinch of salt, and add the sugar a third at a time.
5. Grease with the oil a heat-safe bowl about 5 inches in diameter, and transfer the beaten egg whites into it. Bake in a bain marie for 10 minutes at 325°F. Unmold into a shallow bowl or soup plate and set aside.

Make the miso caramel

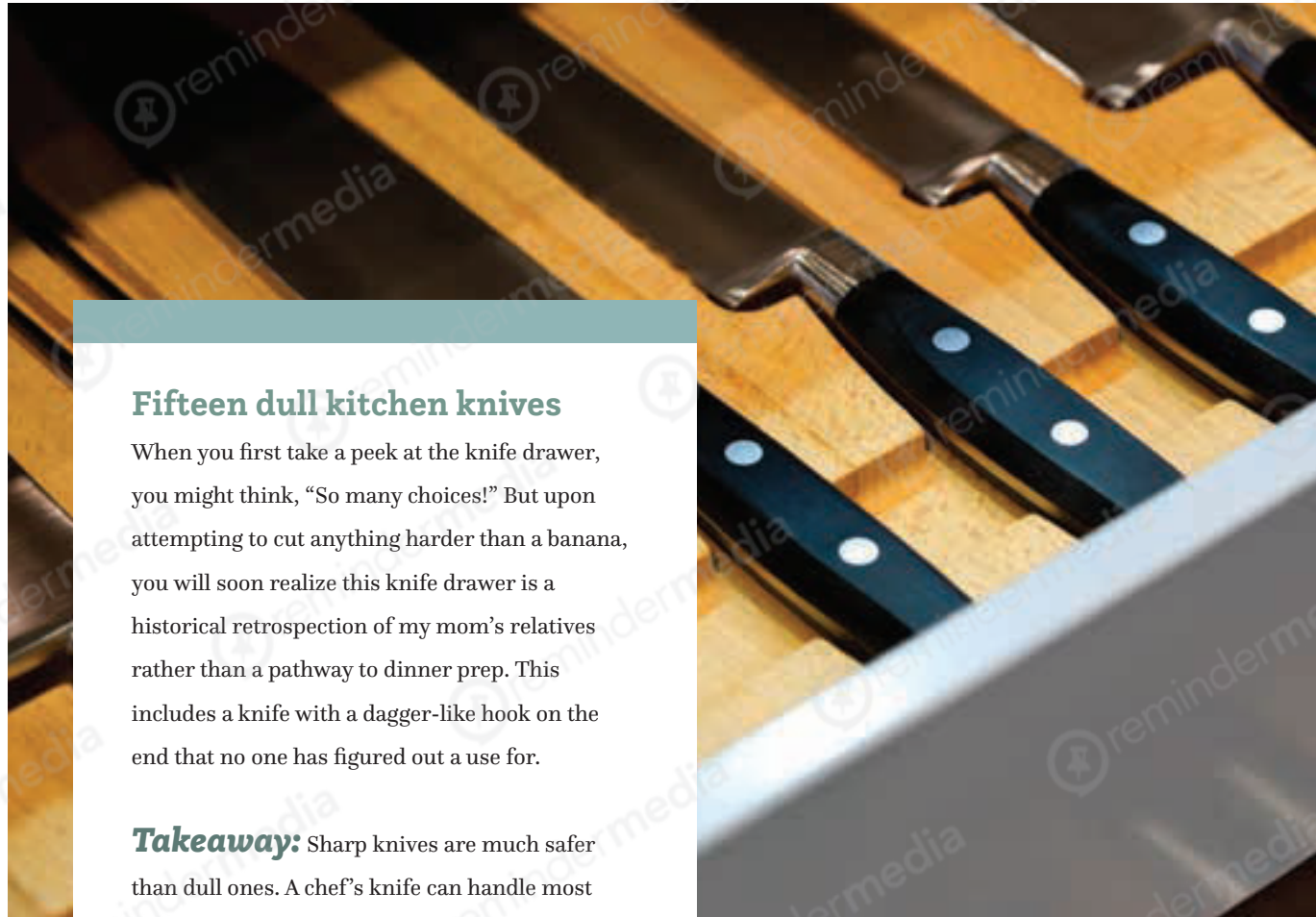
6. In a saucepan, heat the sugars with 2 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon water over high heat, until they take on a lovely caramel color.
7. Remove from the heat, then add the cream, miso, and the butter. Mix to combine.
8. Unmold the meringue on a serving dish. Pour the custard and then the caramel over the meringue, and serve.

My Mom's *Confusing Kitchen*

written by: SHELLEY GOLDSTEIN

I grew up in a house where the refrigerator was a constant game of Jenga and the only person who could find anything was my mom. Despite the grocery store being a mere five minutes away, her mentality is more akin to a frugal but hungry bear about to hibernate without access to food for three months. And the rest of the kitchen isn't much better; her philosophy of "save everything" extends beyond food and into the cabinets, drawers, and countertops.

Like many people, my mindset as an adult is the opposite of my mom's—minimalist with a repulsion toward expired food and extraneous kitchen items. Here are some of the things in her kitchen I've found the most baffling.



Fifteen dull kitchen knives

When you first take a peek at the knife drawer, you might think, “So many choices!” But upon attempting to cut anything harder than a banana, you will soon realize this knife drawer is a historical retrospection of my mom’s relatives rather than a pathway to dinner prep. This includes a knife with a dagger-like hook on the end that no one has figured out a use for.

Takeaway: Sharp knives are much safer than dull ones. A chef’s knife can handle most of your cutting needs, but a paring knife and serrated bread knife are helpful additions.



Tiny condiment collections

Miniature sour cream pyramids from chicken barbecues my dad frequents, soy sauce packets from Chinese restaurants, and jelly squares from the local diner—this plastic menagerie creates a tiny art installation under the plastic dome of the butter compartment. Good luck removing anything without the entire mountain cascading onto the floor.

Takeaway: Such a collection is harmless but potentially annoying if you like a tidy fridge and drawers.

A temperamental electric mixer

If this mixer from the 1970s could speak, it would tell my mom it’s ready to live out the rest of its days in an appliance sanctuary, unplugged. But, alas, this poor vintage Sunbeam is still forced to stir boxed cake mix. The trick is to insert the beaters in the correct order, like a puzzle ring, and then use your hand to coax the geriatric mixer to spin the bowl around.

Takeaway: If you like to bake, upgrade to a KitchenAid or equivalent stand mixer. An old mixer that has lost functionality will mostly cause frustration.



A disgraced electric fry pan

When I was young, my brother and I attempted to make pancakes in this fry pan, not realizing that the temperature dial had come unglued and rotated so what read “350°F” was actually “simmer.” We grew more and more perplexed as the pools of batter slowly congealed instead of cooking. At some point, my mom formed an emotional attachment to this standalone fry pan, so when the nonstick coating began peeling off around the forty-year mark, her solution was to scrape it within an inch of its life until it was just bare metal and utility.

Takeaway: It’s technically safe to remove the coating completely if you use the right method. (Never attempt to burn it off.) Watch out for rust, though.



Spices from 1975

There is some leeway depending on the spice, but for most ground versions, the shelf life ends at four years. To my mom, however, an expiration date is like a badge of honor—proof of her commitment to saving that jar of caraway seeds she hasn’t used in forty years but might need someday if she decides to take up baking rye bread.

Takeaway: Ground spices will not have the same intensity of flavor if kept for too long.

Whether your kitchen is a tiny nook in a studio apartment or a spacious hub with a sprawling island, keeping it organized and stocked with the right tools will make it easy and enjoyable to use. And when negotiating with other family members, accept that people are sentimental creatures and do your best to gently encourage helpful changes.

THE DECISION *to age in place*

written by: BONNIE JOFFE

The ability to continue living safely, comfortably, and independently in your own home is a gift. Per the CDC, 93 percent of Americans aged fifty-five and older prefer to age in place regardless of income, mobility, or health condition. Sidestepping or at least delaying moving into an assisted-living community or retirement home is a key goal for them as they age.

While circumstances are unique to each person, the possibility of aging in place hinges on several factors, such as whether they have financial independence, a reliable support system, access to vital services and resources, and the opportunity to engage socially. This guide offers invaluable insights into what your loved one should consider when planning a secure and fulfilling living situation for the years ahead.

STEPS TO ENSURE SAFETY

Despite the vast majority of older adults aiming to age in place, only 15 percent of them have given much thought to how they plan to modify their homes, according to a poll from the University of Michigan's Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation. However, doing so is essential to ensure your loved one's place can accommodate their shifting needs, allowing them to easily navigate their surroundings with confidence.

Enhance bathroom safety

Most elderly falls occur at home, with up to 80 percent happening in the bathroom. To reduce this risk, install grab bars, handrails, and a raised toilet seat. A shower seat or bench can also aid movement, while eye-level shelves can prevent overreaching. Nonslip mats will enhance stability even further, creating an overall safer environment.

SMART HOME DEVICES, INCLUDING DOORBELL CAMERAS AND VOICE-ACTIVATED HOME ASSISTANTS, HAVE REVOLUTIONIZED SAFETY MEASURES.



Improve lighting

Adequate lighting not only increases visibility but also lowers the chance of tripping over obstacles or misjudging distances. Consider putting a night-light between the bed and the bathroom and within the bathroom itself. Additionally, opt for vibrant LED bulbs for all indoor and outdoor fixtures to ensure every area is properly illuminated.

Use modern technology

Smart home devices, including doorbell cameras and voice-activated home assistants, have revolutionized safety measures. Beyond that, the availability of specialized hearing- and vision-enhancement tools, alongside smartphones and wearable tracking devices, offers a comprehensive support system for older adults. Such elevated technology provides extensive value for emergency situations and response times, enabling your loved one to live independently while also giving them, and you, peace of mind about their safety.

OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER

While aging in place has many benefits, it's crucial to proactively acknowledge and prepare for the potential obstacles that come with this choice.

Reduced access to emergency health care

The accessibility of vital health-care services can differ based on a person's geographic location. For instance, residing in a rural area might entail longer journeys to hospitals or clinics, potentially affecting your loved one's capacity to receive prompt treatment during emergencies, especially if there's unreliable cell service.

Difficulty managing daily household tasks

When people get older, basic chores like laundry, cooking, cleaning, and general home maintenance can become more difficult, even requiring assistance from others. To account for this reality and maintain a comfortable living situation, your loved one needs to be willing to accept help and factor any related costs into their budget.

Lack of a support system

Establishing a solid support system, which may include family members, friends, and in-home care assistants, is essential for the safety and well-being of an older person since it can better mitigate feelings of isolation and help ensure their safety.

If your family member is distant from this network, it might be prudent for them to contemplate moving to a residence nearer to those they can rely on during times of necessity.

Costly home-safety modifications

Keeping your loved one safe in their home depends heavily on the ability to install the necessary modifications. Whether it's putting in a no-step shower with nonslip tiles, widening doorways for a wheelchair, or building a ramp leading up to the home, these modifications can be costly. If such upgrades aren't financially feasible, it may be necessary to relocate your loved one to a home or apartment that offers reasonable accommodations.

Lack of transportation

Driving abilities often decline with age, which can pose a challenge for those wishing to stay in their



WHEN AN ELDERLY FAMILY MEMBER IS NO LONGER CAPABLE OF DRIVING, IT CAN BECOME DIFFICULT TO CONSISTENTLY ORGANIZE TRANSPORTATION FOR THEIR APPOINTMENTS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.



homes—especially if they live in an area where they need to travel long distances for necessities like food or medicine. When an elderly family member is no longer capable of driving, it can become difficult to consistently organize transportation for their appointments and social activities. Furthermore, if they depend on public transit, concerns about their safety and ability to manage these journeys independently may arise.

Aging in place can be a fulfilling experience, so engage in open conversations with your loved one to gain insight into their wishes and needs for doing so. By strategizing and organizing ahead of time, you can simplify the process for both you and your family, ensuring a smoother transition into this next phase of life.



Cool Upgrades for your home

written by: LAUREN KIM

Nothing beats a beautiful sunny day, but when the weather gets uncomfortably warm, you may crave a place to escape the heat. Try these temperature-lowering fixes to make your home a cool oasis even when it's unbearably warm outside.

Plant some greenery

A few trees and shrubs—especially if planted strategically on your home's east and west sides—can yield a refreshing canopy of shade, blocking the sun from shining on your roof and through your windows and overheating your home. Opt for deciduous trees that lose their leaves in fall so you can still enjoy the sun's warmth in winter, and go with lower-growing shrubs like boxwood, holly, and yew and smaller trees like dogwoods or Japanese maples when planting close to your home to prevent roots from damaging its foundation. Consult with a nursery or landscaper to determine what's best for your property.

Install awnings

Retractable awnings are a convenient way to create shade and lower your home's temperature. Install them over your patio, deck, doors, or windows to keep out the sun; some can even be raised or lowered with the touch of a button. Consider waterproof or UV-resistant options, and choose ones in lighter colors since these will reflect more light for an even bigger cooling effect.

Protect windows

Heat gain through windows can account for a big part of your home's energy use, but you can combat it by installing low-E glass that has an invisible

coating to deflect UV rays. For a similar effect at a lower cost, you could also apply a heat-blocking film to your existing windows, which can provide additional privacy, protect your rugs and fabrics from fading, and be easily removed when the weather cools. Another option is to install honeycomb shades, which feature pleated fabric that can filter unwanted heat, or smart shades or blinds that block the sun's rays by automatically opening, closing, and tilting.

Reduce your attic temperature

This space can get excessively hot—as high as 150 degrees in summer—so ensure it's properly insulated with at least ten to fourteen inches of insulation between its floor joists. If you currently have less than this amount, add a layer of loose cellulose insulation or a blanket of unfaced fiberglass batts. You could also expel excess heat by installing an attic fan, either in your attic or on your roof. Consider hiring a professional for these tasks so you can be confident that they are done correctly.

Cool the air

If your central-air system is at least ten years old, buying a new one with a good Energy Star rating might save you 20 to 40 percent in energy costs. But if it's relatively new, simply get it serviced before summer to help it run more efficiently. You could also put up a few ceiling fans to help cool your home and lower your energy bills. For best results, install one in every room that needs cooling and adjust them to spin counterclockwise to create pleasant downdrafts.

With these upgrades, you may find it easier and less expensive to reduce the temperature in your home. And, as a bonus, you may even be able to minimize your carbon footprint.

Retractable awnings are a convenient way to create shade and lower your home's temperature.





SHELF-CARE *for spring*

written by: ALLISON GOMES

With the world awakening in spring, you may feel the itch to refresh your home. But while a full living room revamp could be exciting, it's not always in the cards. Instead, consider focusing on one area—your bookshelf. Whether you're an avid reader, a design enthusiast, or simply looking to infuse some new energy into your place, these tips will help you transform your bookcase into a blooming oasis of inspiration.

A PALETTE OF POSSIBILITIES

The spring season is all about vibrant colors and new beginnings, so why not carry that theme into your bookcase? For a fun, artistic touch, consider arranging your books by color to create a visually stunning display. Get creative with it, trying different gradients

that speak to you and your space. For instance, you could gradually transition from cool winter hues to warmer, sun-kissed tones such as reds, oranges, yellows, and greens, which would mirror the changing landscape outside your window.

If the shelving itself is one tone like white or beige, adding a backdrop is also a great way of infusing color. For a big visual impact, attach temporary wallpaper featuring floral motifs or a pastel color on the back paneling to instantly set a spring tone. It's a simple way of turning the bookcase into a bright work of art that your books can reside in.

A BOUQUET OF BEAUTY

As spring florals begin to bloom, you may be tempted to bring some into your home, and your bookcase is the perfect place to display them. You could place small potted plants like succulents, ferns, or other colorful blooms alongside your books or display freshly cut flowers from your garden or local



market in vases on the top surface. Whatever you choose, the juxtaposition of organic greens against literature will add an instant touch of freshness that breathes new life into your space.

Beyond blooms, consider incorporating other natural elements into your bookshelf styling. Swap out your standard bookends for ones shaped like birds, flowers, playful animals, or anything else that exudes the essence of spring. Or set out small pieces of framed artwork that not only complement the color scheme and theme of the room but also echo the outdoor scenery.

A RADIANT REALM

You can enhance the ambience of your bookcase by playing with lighting. Hang small mirrors on the sides of it or place them on top to reflect the natural light that reaches your space, which can make the whole room feel more open and airy. String lights or small LED lamps nestled among your books can further create a cozy and inviting atmosphere, especially as the sun sets; in the dampened room, your space will emit a warm glow reminiscent of a spring evening.

This spring, embrace the opportunity to infuse your shelves with elements that reflect the changing world, transforming them into a captivating ode to the season.



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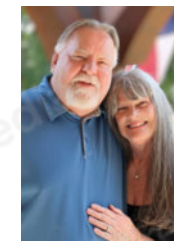


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Front of Tear Out Card 2



Landscaping enables you to add your own personal flair to the outside of your home and also increases its curb appeal—a definite win-win! However, determining the most aesthetically pleasing way to display your flora can be tricky. These three unique window box ideas are simple to make and are bound to brighten up the exterior of your house!



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Back of Tear Out Card 2



WOODEN PALLET

Rustic decor is all the craze. Both indoor and outdoor wooden embellishments are everywhere. This window box utilizes pallets, giving your flowers a cozy space and your home a country vibe.

FARMHOUSE TUB

When you think of a galvanized metal tub, you probably envision it being used on a farm. This window box design utilizes a tub to host a variety of green, luscious plants—giving the exterior a farm feeling, regardless of location.

BUREAU DRAWER

Do you have a hand-me-down dresser with drawers that are chipped? Bring it back to life by using it as the base of this window box, and add a vintage ambience to the outside of your house!

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