



SPRING Home & Garden

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Interior design: trends to watch for in 2025

Are you interested in contemporary, on-trend home decor? Check out the following 2025 interior design trends to elevate your home.

COLOURS

This year's hottest colours are ear-

thy tones and deep blues inspired by nature and travel. These shades create a serene atmosphere. Terracotta and moss green are essential colours for connecting indoor and outdoor spaces

in every season.

You can incorporate these colours into your decor by painting your walls or using wallpaper. You can also integrate them through furniture or textiles, such as curtains, cushions and rugs.

MATERIALS

Sophisticated, easy-care materials like raw wood, marble and steel are trending in stylish homes. Glass will also be considered a must-have for its elegance and versatility. Whether

it's translucent, frosted or textured, glass adds a sense of openness and luminosity to your living space.

Polished concrete and natural stone are still popular with people who prefer timeless, minimalist designs. Durability is a key consideration this year. Consequently, eco-friendly and recycled materials have become essential choices for responsible homeowners.

STYLES

The maximalist trend continues to captivate with its bold, contrasting patterns, textures and colours. At the same time, retro styles from the 70s and 80s are making a strong comeback, offering warm, vibrant interiors that appeal to those who savour nostalgia. Although minimalism is still going strong, it's gradually giving way to more eccentric and personalized styles.

Another trendy style is Japandi, a harmonious blend of Scandinavian esthetics and Japanese serenity. This style focuses on simple lines, natural materials and functional spaces,

creating a calming, uncluttered environment ideal for those craving serenity.

ACCESSORIES

This year, unique tableware is a decorative element unto itself. Additionally, using mirrors in various shapes and sizes can help visually expand your space. As smart technologies become more prevalent, integrating touch screens into your decor can add a modern feel.

Sculptural light fixtures and oversized wall art are major focal points in modern decor. Biophilic design is a trend worth considering, popularizing the idea of incorporating plants into your home—think hanging pots and living walls. Lastly, textured cushions made from thick fabrics help create a warm, inviting atmosphere. The right accessories can really create that wow factor.

Contact an interior design expert and visit your local home decorating stores to bring these trends to life in your home.

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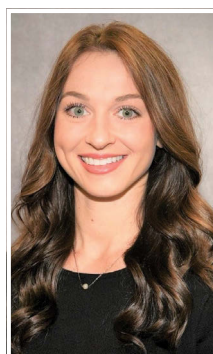
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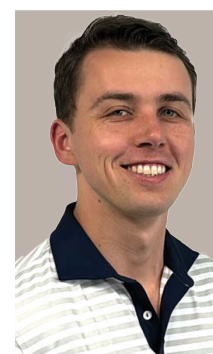
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“My houseplants always die!”

Natural plants can bring life to any room. Do the plants you buy tend to die within a few months—or even weeks? You might be making some common mistakes. Here's what you need to know.

COMMON CAUSES

Most problems affecting indoor plants are caused by the following factors:

- **Both insufficient and excessive watering can harm your plants.** Check the moisture level by gently sticking your finger into the soil about 2.5 centimetres deep. If the soil feels dry, it's time to water.
- **Different plants have different light requirements.** Some thrive in bright sunlight, while others prefer cooler, shadier spots. Make sure you know what your plants need.

- **Dust can collect on leaves, blocking sunlight and preventing photosynthesis.** Gently clean your plant's leaves regularly to keep them healthy.
- **If the pot is too small, the plant may become root-bound and struggle to grow.** Periodically repot your plants to promote growth.
- **Ordinary potting soil may not provide enough nutrients for long-term health.** Fertilizing your plants is necessary to ensure they thrive.
- **Always inspect new plants for pests and diseases.** Keep them isolated from your other plants for a few weeks to prevent spreading. Consult an expert at your local greenhouse or garden centre for more advice on caring for your houseplants or to learn which species are most resilient.



Furnishing a small living room.

Does your living room feel cramped? Try these expert decorating tips to make your small space both functional

and esthetically pleasing:

- **Choose light colours.** Light shades help create a sense

of space by reflecting light. Colours like off-white, beige and pearl grey are perfect for creating a light atmos-

phere.

- **Pick your furniture wisely.** Look for small or multi-functional pieces of furniture, such as nesting tables and storage ottomans. Avoid bulky items that take up too much space.
- **Decorate sparingly.** Leave as much free space as possible to avoid overcrowding the space. Instead,

stick to a few carefully selected pictures or accessories to add character.

- **Provide multiple light sources.** Use subtle, indirect lighting and accent lamps to compensate for a lack of natural light, which can make the living room feel even smaller. Wall-mounted fixtures are particularly effective because they free up

floor space for a more streamlined appearance.

- **Play with mirrors.** Mirrors reflect light and create the illusion of depth. Place a mirror opposite a window to maximize natural light and create a feeling of openness.

Visit your local shops to find everything you need to create a living room you love.

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What should you consider when choosing your kitchen cabinets?

Is your kitchen outdated and in need of a makeover? The right choice of cabinets can take your space from drab to fab. Consider these factors to guide your choice.

BUDGET

What's the most you can spend? If you're on a tight budget, you might want to consider prefabricated cabinets, which are typically the most affordable. Custom-built cabinets can be an excellent choice for a truly individualized look. However, they come at a much higher price point.

MATERIAL

The material you choose for your cabinets will significantly affect your kitchen's finished look and feel. Different materials vary not only in price but also in their unique characteristics:

- Imitation lacquer is relatively new to the market. This material is highly

resistant to scratches and water damage.

- Wood is a timeless option that can add that inimitable sense of warmth to your space.
- Melamine is an affordable choice and comes in a wide range of colours.
- Acrylic is a glossy material that can give your kitchen a modern look.

There are many additional materials to consider, so don't hesitate to talk to an expert.

HANDLES

You may think handles are a trivial detail, but they can make a significant difference in the overall appearance of your cabinets. Knobs, which typically require a single screw, are generally the most affordable option.

Two-screw models, although more expensive, offer a broader



variety of styles. You can also find handleless cabinet designs that are perfect for creating a minimalist look.

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Laminate countertops: an attractive option

Are you in the process of renovating your kitchen or bathroom and trying to choose a countertop material? Laminate could be an excellent choice. Here's a short guide to help you familiarize yourself with this material.

MANUFACTURING

The manufacturing process for laminate is relatively straightforward. It consists of several layers of kraft paper coated with resin and then heat-cured. These layers are compressed and bonded together to create the final product.

ADVANTAGES

One of the primary advantages of laminate countertops is their affordability. They typically cost between \$10 and \$40 per square foot. They're also versatile, as they can be cut to fit the dimensions required for your project and are available in various colours and finishes.

DISADVANTAGES

However, laminate countertops have some drawbacks. Laminate tends to wear out more quickly than other materials and is only moderately heat resistant. This means that it's susceptible to warping and scratching. Once damaged, laminate can be difficult to repair.

Despite these shortcomings, laminate countertops remain a viable option for many projects. Visit a local specialist retailer to learn more.



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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:

- **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.

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

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

- **Tree characteristics.** You must consider various aspects of the tree, including its height, width, shape, type, colour of the leaves, flowering habits and other



characteristics that suit the available space and match your preferences.

- **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 neighbour's proper-

ty or that will eventually shade your vegetable garden.

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

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

GOOD TO KNOW

Developed by scientists and policymakers at Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN), the My Tree app helps you choose the right tree for your backyard. It includes over 180 native and introduced tree species and their colour-coded hardiness zones.

New pools: long live wood!

Have you noticed wood pools popping up around your area? Wood is becoming increasingly popular for both above-ground pools and pool decks. Here are some advantages.

REMARKABLY GOOD LOOKING

Wood can take your pool area to the next level, breaking away from the classic look of aluminum. It can blend into your property's landscaping, complement your home's siding or create visual continuity with the trees around the pool.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TREATED PINE

Treated pine is harder and more resistant than cedar, making it the most popular species among manufacturers. The wood slats are treated to remove any moisture and then stuck together, which protects the pool from cracking and warping. Treated pine is also highly impact-resistant, making it the material of choice for an in-ground pool deck.



Want a trendy pool? Consider wood!

3 landscaping trends for 2024 Let yourself be inspired!

Do you want to add some flair to your yard? Here are a few trends that'll be everywhere in 2024.

1. Zen spaces

It's essential to make time to escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life and recharge your batteries. That's why many homeowners are creating Zen gardens on their property. These gardens are distinguished by their stunning rock arrangements, flagstone paths, minimalist plants, soothing sculptures and water features like pools, waterfalls and fountains.

2. Pergolas

Often made of wood, vinyl or aluminum, these structures are a must for elegantly defining your outdoor space and creating a casual shaded area. Depending on your preferences, you can install yours on a paved surface or your deck. With some well-placed furniture and decorative elements, it'll become your favourite place to enjoy the summer!

3. Rock gardens

Rock gardens are ideal for creating a modern-looking landscape, featuring a few well-chosen plants that require very little maintenance. If mowing the lawn and weeding aren't your go-to pastimes, a rock garden is the way to go.

Visit your local nurseries and garden centres to find everything you need to enhance the beauty of your yard this year.



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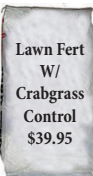
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Treat yourself to a dream porch this year — and enjoy the summer!

Does your home have a spacious porch that's lacking a little love? Here are some tips to help you create a beautiful, comfortable outdoor space you'll love spending time in.

• **Flooring.** A stylish and durable floor provides the perfect base for your porch design. You can explore a variety of options specifically designed for outdoor use. There are many materials to choose from, including engineered fibreglass, treated wood, composite wood and aluminum slats.

• **Railing.** Enhance the look of your porch with a brand-new railing. Depending on the degree of privacy you want, you can opt for solid or frosted panels, balusters

or spindles. You can choose from various materials, including steel, aluminum and wood — and styles ranging from contemporary to minimalist or rustic. The choice is yours!

• **Carpet.** You can find a variety of low-maintenance rugs and carpets specially designed for outdoor use. You can cover your entire porch or just a portion of it. Choose the patterns and colours that appeal most to you.

• **Furniture.** A bistro set is an excellent addition to your porch. It consists of a small table and two matching chairs. If you have enough space, add furniture like a bench, storage box, chaise longue, pouffe, rocking chair,

porch swing, hanging chair or hammock. Just make sure you choose furniture that can withstand the elements.

• **Decorations.** Decorative accessories are vital in creating a living space that reflects your personality. Visit your local home decor stores, antique shops, hardware stores and artist studios to find sculptures, mobiles, string lights, decorative flags, cushions, throws and more. Let your true colours shine!

• **Plants.** Whether in pots, flower boxes or hanging



planters, plants add life and freshness to your outdoor decor. Visit your local nurseries and garden centres to choose species that are beautiful and easy to care for. Don't have a green thumb? No problem! You can easily find magnificent and convincingly real artificial plants and flowers.

• **Accessorize.** A variety of accessories can enhance your experience on your revamped porch. Colourful patio umbrellas, UV-resistant canvases, electric barbecues, and mini-fridges are just a few options to explore at your local stores.

With all these ideas, you're sure to impress!

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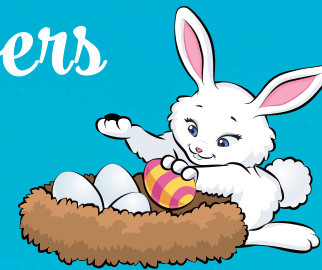
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Decluttering isn't rocket science!

Is your home starting to look like a flea market or a second-hand store? Do you have too many of everything, including clothing, books, decorations, dishes, toys and tools? Have you accumulated things you haven't used in years? Do you have duplicates or even triplicates of some items? Follow this guide to sort through your possessions without losing steam.

Set realistic goals

Having a home that's cluttered from the basement to the attic can feel overwhelming, and for good reason. To avoid getting discouraged and drained, organizational experts recommend breaking the task into smaller, more manageable jobs.

For example, focus on one room a week or one drawer a day.

You can check off completed tasks as you go, such as decluttering the game room. This approach is much more practical and motivating than aiming to declutter your entire home in one go and feeling like you're not making any progress.

Make piles of similar objects

If you want to declutter like a pro, use the tried-and-true pile technique. This method involves grouping similar items on a large surface, such as a big table or the floor.

For instance, when you tackle the kitchen, put all the cups on the table. Similarly, throw all your clothes on the bed when you're decluttering the closet. You'll probably discover that many of your possessions have hardly been used. So, why hold on to them? Simply asking yourself this question is a sign that you don't need them anymore.

Sort everything into giveaway, sell or throw-away piles

Don't let unused items collect dust in your home. Instead of holding on to extra dishes or small appliances, like hair dryers, consider giving them to young people moving into a new place or donating them to a local thrift shop.

Do you have some valuable items? Sell them to make some extra cash. If you have expired or broken items, dispose of them responsibly by checking your local waste collection and disposal guidelines. To make the sorting process easier, prepare three boxes or bags marked "Give away," "Sell" and "Throw away."

Have a "get rid of by" container ready

When you're trying to declutter your space, it can be challenging to let go of certain items. If you find yourself contemplating whether to keep or throw away some things, try this: gather all the items you're unsure about and put them in a box marked "Items to be get rid of if unused by [insert date]." Don't forget to mark this deadline on your calendar.

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7 steps to clean your pantry like a pro

Cleaning out your pantry is one of those chores you only do maybe once a year. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to do it right from cleaning and organization professionals:

1. Empty the pantry completely. You may make some surprising discoveries!
2. Sort all the food by category. For example, group together spices, canned vegetables and cereals.

3. Check the expiry dates and get rid of any out-of-date products. If you can't find a date, consult a credible source, like a government website, to determine the approximate shelf life of popular food items.

4. Clean the walls and shelves inside the pantry with an all-purpose cleaner.

5. Wipe down the outside of plastic and glass containers and bottles with a damp cloth.

6. Carefully put all the items back on the shelves or in storage baskets. For instance, put the items you use most often within easy reach or place canned goods together.

7. Wipe down the outside of the pantry, including the doors and handles.

A clean, well-organized pantry will make cooking easier and minimize food waste. What are you waiting for?

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The satisfaction of stain removal

Certain substances easily stain fabrics and other materials. However, there are several tried and tested home remedies that can be used to remove stubborn stains. Here are a handful:

- **Red wine.** Cover the affected area with a mixture of baking soda and lemon juice. Let it soak for about an hour. You can also use white vinegar to dab out the stain if it's already dry. Finally, rinse with clean, cool water.

- **Pen ink.** Apply a bit of white toothpaste or rubbing alcohol to the

affected area and rub vigorously. You can also try using a paste made from milk and cornstarch and brushing off the dried residue after a few hours.

- **Coffee.** Blot the affected area with a mixture of lukewarm water, dishwashing soap (or laundry detergent) and white vinegar. Let the mixture sit for several minutes and then wash the item as usual. If the stain is still visible, gently dab it with rubbing alcohol.

- **Blood.** If you're dealing with dried blood, soak the affected area



in cool water mixed with white vinegar. Let it sit for about 15 minutes. Blot the mixture and rinse the garment with clean water. Avoid

using hot water as this can set the stain.

Removing stains always gives you a feeling of relief and satisfaction. Give it a try!

Spring cleaning Tips for sparkling clean walls and floors

Over a year, your walls and floors can accumulate a lot of dirt. When it's time for a good spring cleaning, use these tips to make them sparkle.

Painted walls

Start by removing dust and cobwebs from your walls using your vacuum's brush attachment or a telescopic mop with a duster. Then, dampen a cloth with a mixture of warm water and mild soap and wipe down the walls, working from top to bottom. Rinse with clean water and allow to dry.

For stubborn dirt, use a stain remover specifically designed for painted walls. Be careful not to use the wrong product, as it could do more harm than good.

Floors

Start by removing dust, crumbs and other debris from your floor. While a traditional broom works, vacuuming is a better choice. Next, clean the floors with a mixture of water and a dash of mild detergent that won't leave streaks. Be careful not to let the floors get too wet.

For best results, purchase a product specifically designed to clean your specific flooring, whether you have hardwood, bamboo, vinyl or ceramic.



EVERYTHING HOME



Are you choosing appliances within your budget?

AVOID GOING INTO DEBT WITH THESE SMART TIPS



The cost of new household appliances can quickly add up. Are you choosing household appliances and entertainment equipment that fit into your budget? By following these tips, you can avoid overspending.

Appliances

It can be tempting to opt for the latest refrigerator or washer-dryer set. Although modern appliances can be visually appealing and offer advanced tech features, they can be expensive. Plus, many of the settings may be useless to you. You can save hundreds of dollars by purchasing a more traditional model with fewer sophisticated electronic

components.

Entertainment

The latest big-screen TVs, tablet computers and powerful game consoles can be hard to resist. However, remember that bigger and more powerful devices tend to consume more electricity, which can add to the overall cost of ownership beyond the purchase price.

Consider choosing a smaller screen or limiting the number of additional devices you buy. Your wallet will thank you. Gadgets can be fun; just make sure they'll serve a practical purpose before you decide to spend your money on them.

Affordable alternatives

Many retailers now offer refurbished products, providing an excellent opportunity to get the device you want at a lower price. You can also save money on household appliances by getting them second-hand.

Additionally, purchasing refurbished or pre-owned items keeps them out of landfills and reduces your carbon footprint. Saving money while protecting the environment? It's a win-win situation.

Are you looking for appliances that fit your budget? Visit a specialized retailer near you for advice.



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Home and yard care 10 essential springtime tasks

The days are growing longer and warmer, coaxing you to step outside and enjoy the invigorating spring air. Warmer weather also means it's time to tackle some important chores. Here's an overview:

1. Inspect the roof. Check for missing shingles, popped nails, standing water, membrane damage and signs of mould. If you notice any of these signs, repairs are needed.

2. Clean the gutters. Look for cracks and remove debris that could prevent water from draining. Make sure water drains away from the foundation.

3. Look at the attic and ceiling. Look for signs of leakage, such as rings, mould or peeling paint. Check also for nests or droppings that indicate the presence of unwanted pests.

4. Inspect the foundation. If you notice narrow cracks, seal them with an appropriate product. Consult an expert if the cracks are wider than a

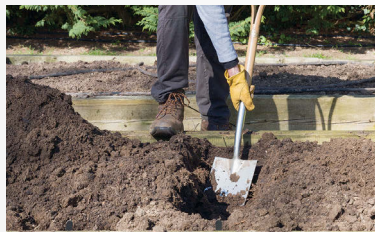
centimetre.

5. Examine the windows. Check for damaged caulking and replace it if necessary. Ensure all your windows open and close smoothly and the screens are intact.

6. Deal with exterior taps. Turn on the water and inspect the tap for leaks. Cover the mouth of the faucet with your thumb. If everything is functioning properly, you shouldn't be able to stop the flow easily.

7. Prepare the soil. Fertilize and amend the soil as needed. If you haven't done this in a few years, consider getting a soil analysis to determine how to boost plant growth.

8. Trim vegetation. Cut back perennials you didn't get to in the fall and trim any branches that are dangerously

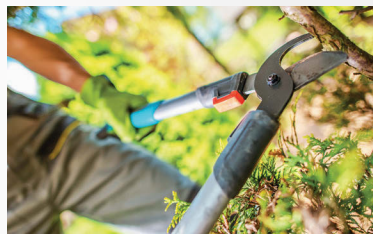


close to your house. Remove broken branches that didn't survive the winter.

9. Maintain your gardening tools. Ensure your hedge trimmer, lawnmower, edger and other tools are ready to use. Sharpen the blades, check the oil levels and clean or replace any parts as necessary.

10. Test your air conditioner. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on changing or cleaning your air conditioner's filters and coils. Then, turn it on, test it and fix any issues before the first heat wave hits.

Call a maintenance professional or get started right away and make the most of this spring.



Did you know that real estate agents can also help you rent?

Finding a living space to suit your needs and budget can be quite a challenge. From the landlord's perspective, the search for a reliable and trustworthy tenant can be equally daunting. Fortunately, a real estate agent can simplify the process for both parties.

For tenants

Rental properties are rarely in short supply. However, some listings can be problematic due to inaccurate photos, unreasonable requests or discrimination. A real estate agent can help verify the legitimacy of the property and guide you through all the legal stages of the rental process.

Real estate agents have keen insights into the housing market and often know of available properties not listed on popular rental websites. During housing

shortages, this access can greatly increase your chances of finding that rare gem.

For homeowners

From the homeowner's point of view, putting a house or apartment up for rent can be overwhelming. A real estate agent can assist with various tasks, such as taking professional photos of the property, organizing viewings and even managing credit and reference checks for potential tenants.

In addition, real estate agents are marketing experts. They can boost the visibility of a rental property through specialized platforms, virtual tours and social media.

Are you looking for a home or a tenant? Contact a real estate agent in your area today to make the process easier.



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Canadians use more than 200 litres of water daily for hygiene, laundry and dishwashing. Good, long-lasting pipes are essential to everyday life, which is why plumbers are so important.

An industry that plays a central role

On-demand access to water in your home is easy to take for granted. However, this convenience relies on a well-maintained plumbing system. This complex network does more than deliver drinking water. It also serves as a wastewater removal system, which is crucial in reducing the spread of disease.

Plumbers in both the residential and industrial sectors play a critical role in maintaining your quality of life. Their professional skills enable them to diagnose and resolve issues like water leaks and pipe blockages.

Plumbers use their training and expertise to deliver effective, long-lasting repairs that meet strict safety standards. You might be tempted to try to save money by tackling plumbing tasks on your own, but hiring a qualified professional will save you a lot of time.

Valuable advice from a plumber

You don't need to wait until you have a problem to call a plumber. If you're considering home improvements or renovations, a qualified plumber can help.

Plumbers stay informed about the latest advancements and developments in the plumbing industry. Consult a qualified plumber before starting any renovation work to explore various energy-saving solutions tailored to your home's unique features.

A day to celebrate the trade

March 11 marks World Plumbing Day. Established in 2010 by the World Plumbing Council, this event emphasizes the vital role plumbing plays in ensuring health and comfort. It highlights the importance of the plumbing profession and acknowledges the technical skills involved in this essential trade.

Do you need to repair or renovate your kitchen or bathroom? Visit a plumbing store or call a professional in your area for the best results.



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