

# your home

Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

## new year, SAME HOME

*Make a resolution to declutter and reorganize these 5 rooms*

Now that the new year is here, it's time to get organized. After the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, it is easy for things to be shuffled around or misplaced. Here are the five rooms or areas in your home that deserve immediate reorganization and attention:



1. **The kitchen.** Typically the gathering place for holiday functions, it's possible that many of your beloved plates, Tupperware and even coffee mugs were moved around by visiting friends and family members. To free up cupboard space, try hanging your pots and pans or decluttering with drawer organizers.
2. **The bathroom.** The most used room in the house, you're probably not looking forward to getting this space in order. But beyond a wave of the toilet wand, under-the-sink storage and behind-the-door hooks create more space and make getting ready in the morning a breeze!
3. **The closet.** Your wardrobe could potentially be a mix of summer, fall and winter attire. Getting some under-the-bed storage will finally force you to put away the shorts and tank tops, and see-through shoe boxes will keep your favorite pairs crisp and clean.
4. **The laundry room.** Overhead or hideaway storage options will work best for this room, creating more space for loads of dirty (or clean) laundry. Try a drying rack that you can hang from the ceiling, or a storage tower on wheels for all of your detergents and fabric softeners.
5. **The home office.** Finally, if you've worked from home during the holiday season, chances are your office may be in disarray. Drawer organizers or a brand new bookshelf can help you keep all your important mail, documents and books in their place.

## GOING GREEN!

It may be the dead of winter, but you can still go green! Check out these five easy ways to make your home more eco-friendly and lower your energy bills.

- ➔ **Insulate the attic.** Draftiness can come from poorly insulated windows, but it can also be the result of other sources of cold air that increase heating and cooling costs. Taking a step to properly insulate your attic can save you hundreds of dollars.
- ➔ **Keep your vents open.** It's often said that closing your vents will save you money, but over time it can lead to your HVAC system leaking and potentially malfunctioning.
- ➔ **Keep a sweater on hand.** While you may prefer to stay cozied up by the fireside all winter long, your pockets will thank you if you just grab your favorite sweater or sweatshirt to keep warm. When at home, set your thermostat between 62 and 65 degrees, or add a space heater to rooms to keep them warm while you're in them.
- ➔ **Check (and change) filters.** Dust and debris tend to build up in air filters and may cause your heating and cooling systems to work overtime. Before it gets too chilly, switch out any old filters to make sure air flows properly throughout your home.
- ➔ **Turn off the lights.** Holiday light decorations can be fun and exciting, but they can also send your electric bill through the roof. Be sure to cut off all lights inside and outside of the house when they're not in use.

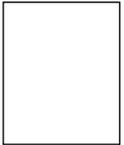




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## no place LIKE HOME

*4 decorative ways to liven up your home after the holidays*

↘ The holiday season may be over, but that doesn't mean you have to throw away all the holiday cheer. These post-holiday décor ideas will keep your home cozy and beautiful until springtime blooms.

**1 Get colorful.** From throw pillows and blankets to rugs and drapes, a pop of color can brighten any room. Colors like dark teal, burgundy, olive or slate gray would be a warm addition to any room in the house.

**2 Let the sunshine in.** The sun may not be shining much during the winter, but there are ways to allow for more light to enter your space. Aside from opening a window to let in natural light, adding a mirror or translucent shades to your favorite room can also create more brightness.

**3 Plants, plants, plants.** Activate your green thumb in the wintertime with a few houseplants. Not only will they help you look forward to spring, but they will remove toxins and keep your home clean.

**4 Warm it up.** Jolly Old St. Nick may have retired to the North Pole for the year, but that doesn't mean you can forget about your fireplace. Jazz up your mantel with candles, wreaths, pine cones and evergreen clippings to keep the spirit of the holiday season alive.



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