

YOUR HOME

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TIPS AND TRENDS TO HELP MAXIMIZE HOME BUYING AND SELLING

OFFICE SPACE

You know it's important to keep your business and personal lives separate, but that can be tricky when they take place under the same roof. So when you decide to set up a home office, keep the following tips from HGTV and Lowe's in mind.

The first step in drawing a line between work and play is with your computer. It might be tempting to use the family computer for business, but that increases the chances that someone might accidentally delete an important file. A dedicated business-only computer will help you avoid that danger. You also might need to have professionals install additional electrical, phone or cable outlets to accommodate your various office equipment (phone, computer, fax, etc.).

Experts suggest that you divide your new office into three sections: the work center, the reference center and the supply center. The work center includes your desk, computer and things you use on a regular basis. The reference center includes dictionaries, books, binders, etc. Consider placing a small filing cabinet or installing shelves behind your desk for easy access. Finally, the supply center of your workspace holds all your office supplies. To save money on storage solutions, consider using shoeboxes for holding note cards and other small items, for example, or jars for keeping pens and pencils.



BREATHE EASY

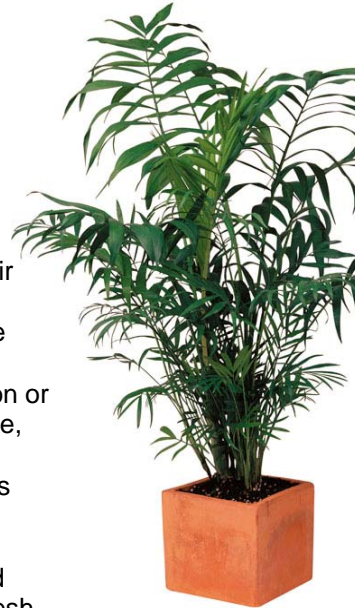
Indoor pollution sources that release gases or particles into the air are the primary cause of indoor air quality problems in homes. These three strategies from the Environmental Protection Agency will help improve air quality in your home.

Source control. The most effective way to improve indoor air quality is to eliminate individual sources of pollution or to reduce their emissions. For example, areas that contain asbestos can be sealed off or enclosed, and gas stoves can be adjusted to decrease their emissions.

Improved ventilation. Heating and cooling systems don't usually bring fresh air into your home. To increase the amount of outdoor air that comes inside, open windows and doors, operate window or attic fans when the weather permits, or run a window air conditioner with the vent control open. And save pollutant-emitting activities like painting, sanding, soldering or welding for outside.

Air cleaners. There are many types and sizes of air cleaners on the market, from relatively inexpensive tabletop models to sophisticated and expensive whole-house systems. Some air cleaners are highly effective at particle removal, while others are much less so. In general, air cleaners are not designed to remove gaseous pollutants.

For a simpler solution, try a plant. Although it has not been scientifically proven, there is some evidence that household plants can help remove significant quantities of pollutants from the air in your home. But be careful: overwatering plants can be detrimental to your home's air quality — damp soil can promote the growth of microorganisms.



fast fact >> >> >

The average American consumes 4,500 calories on Thanksgiving.

Source: Calorie Control Council



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Window Shopping

When it comes to window treatments, the options might seem endless, but the decision process doesn't have to be overwhelming. HGTV recommends that you focus on the four main options: blinds, shutters, shades and curtains.

During the winter months, window

treatments can affect the temperature in your home. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, pairing close-fitting drapes with a cornice can reduce airflow around windows by up to 25 percent. If you mount your shades or blinds inside your window casting, you'll also be able to minimize drafts, and be ensured a cozy, warm winter.

Keep in mind that color and pattern

are key when deciding what window treatment to use. Lighter colors will make a smaller room appear larger, while darker colors tend to shrink a room. Mix it up by playing with different textured shades such as rattan or bamboo.

Shades and curtains made from lighter fabrics allow more light to filter into the room. But depending on your taste, a heavier fabric can look more elegant, while a longer drapery will look more formal. To ensure you have enough fabric for overlapping, buy an amount of fabric two to four times the width of the window.

The cost for window treatments varies almost as much as the options themselves. You could spend anywhere from \$16 for a light, sheer shade, to \$400 for wood shutters.

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DID YOU KNOW?

In 1863, Abraham Lincoln gave his Thanksgiving Day Proclamation, making Thanksgiving an official national holiday.

Source: National Parks Service



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