

your home

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Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers



➤ If you're thinking about taking a late summer trip with your friends or family, camping offers an affordable and fun option. It not only gives everyone a chance to unplug from their devices and spend some time focusing on each other and nature, but it has even been shown to help children deal with stress and decrease restlessness. This advice from Parents.com will help ensure your camping trip is fun and safe.

No campsite is complete without a fire, so get your whole family involved by sending them to collect wood. Smaller children can help by picking up small sticks and twigs or bark, while teens and adults can collect larger logs to be used as fuel.

Once the fire is roaring, you're going to want to cook up some fun and delicious campfire treats. Beyond the classic s'mores, try skewering an unpeeled banana and cooking it on the fire the same way you would marshmallows. Once it's soft, slice it down the middle, add your own treats like chocolate chips, and use a spoon to eat it. Quesadillas are another easy option: just wrap the uncooked quesadilla in foil and throw it in a cast iron pan or directly on the grill.

Of course, any time you're in the wilderness and around fire, there is a chance for injury. Make sure you're prepared to deal with these situations when they arise by packing an emergency supply kit. Include key items in the such as first-aid supplies, blankets, batteries, water, medication, flashlight, maps, and a compass or GPS.

CLEANING HOUSE

While cleaning may be one of the last things on your mind when you're out in the sun having fun this summer, that doesn't mean you can't still take some steps to spruce up your house and prepare yourself for fall. With the following tips from Organizedhome.com, you can make your summer more pleasant and ensure the transition to fall goes smoothly.

Easy opening: You'll be opening and closing sliding doors in your home many times this summer, and if the tracks are dirty, they'll be more difficult to open. Using a degreasing all-purpose cleaner and a screwdriver covered with a rag, you can eliminate the grit. Simply spray the cleaner into the track, let it sit for a few minutes, and then run the rag through the track to pick up the dirt.

Stop the smell: When it's really hot outside, a garbage can's smell can get out of control. To neutralize this, clean the inside of your garbage can by rinsing it with a hose, spraying it with disinfectant and then repeating. Leave it upside down to dry and once you're done, use trash bags or liners to keep the inside of the can from retaining odor.

Take advantage of the season: Maintenance and cleaning businesses - like carpet cleaners, gutter services and window washers - are slow in the summer, so look for discounts on these services. Summer is not as busy for the furnace business, so scheduling maintenance for your HVAC system is a great idea. It's easier to get the serviceman to your house, and you'll be well prepared for the first cold fall night.

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A MOVING experience

➤ Moving is often a stressful experience, even when it goes well. While you may never have a great time boxing up your possessions and moving them to a new place, there are certainly steps you can take to make the experience as easy as possible. Here are a few tips from Styleathome.com that can help you save time and reduce your stress when moving.

CHOOSE WISELY: You will want to make sure whatever transportation you choose has enough room for all of your things, especially if the move is far enough that you only want to make one trip. Generally, the contents of a one-bedroom apartment will fit in a 16-foot cube truck, while two or three bedrooms usually fit in a 24- or 26-foot truck. If you're moving a full house, you can also use a 24- or 26-foot truck, but if you have a lot of possessions, it might require two trips.

MAKE A PLAN: Before you put anything in a box or contact movers, create an itemized list of everything that should be done and follow it

as you go. This will make the move easier for yourself and others who are helping you. If you're using movers, you should also make an inventory as you pack, and check it when you unpack to make sure none of your items were lost.

COMMUNICATE: Once you have a plan, make sure your movers are aware of your requirements. The more information they have about the situation, the less time they will

require and the more prepared they will be. If you're moving into a condo or apartment, ask your landlord or building supervisor if there is anything you should know about moving into the building. For example, condos often have service elevators you can reserve for the move.



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