

This time of the year we all have a little more time on our hands. The holidays are over and spring planting and vacations are still a few weeks away. I want to share some ideas with you today that I hope you will find enlighten and even fun. The reward will be a more positive attitude towards your home, your family and yourself. Many of these ideas will only take you 15-30 minutes to accomplish but the results will amaze you. – Vicki Payne & Sloan Rutter

De-Clutter Your House

Refrigerator Surface

Make or buy a pretty bulletin board for the walls to keep track of your notes and information. Glue Corkboard to the inside of a kitchen cabinet door.

Put your pictures in an album or pretty matching frames that can be displayed in your family room or bedroom.

Inside

Check each item's expiration date. Pitch the out of date ones or the ones you never use. Clean the shelves and place a fresh box of Baking Soda on the shelf. Fantastic is the best cleaner to use. Try the new lemon scented one.

Sink

Purchase pretty glass containers to be used for dish soap and hand cream. Find a great box, glass dish or sponges and scrubbers. Buy new dish towels and recycle the old stained ones to the rag box.

Counters

Clean the surfaces of all your small appliances and store them under a basket or in a cabinet. Larger appliances such as toaster ovens and grills can be placed on a roll away cart and stored in a nearby laundry room or closet.

Cabinets

Throw out all mismatched containers and damaged items including chipped dishes. Recycle your dishes if you have more than one set. Put the old ones away and get out another set. Even if it's your mother's china.

Take down items over tops of cabinets, clean and redo your displays.

If your shelves are stained, wipe them down and line them with pretty shelf paper.

Clean out your silverware drawer and if needed buy new organizers.

Toss out those blackened cookie sheets and spring for new ones. The same goes for melted utensils.

Clear out the junk drawer

Check spices and food cans for expiration dates and pitch. Take items you will never use to the food bank.

General Spring Cleaning

Get your windows washed or do it yourself.

Clean the mirrors. All of them

Wash marks off the walls and if you feel up to it, wash the walls.

Clean the woodwork. Add a little lemon juice to the water to brighten up the finish.

De-odorize the place. Get rid of household smells.

Take down your drapes and maybe you don't put them up again until Fall.

Wash the floors.

Clean or replace silk plants

Clean, repot, or replace living plants.

Update Your House

Yard and Entry

Trim the shrubs below windows

Replace old woody ones with the new every blooming roses

Buy a new mail box

Create a new planting area around your mail box

Power wash your porch, driveway or walkways.

Replace or clean your outdoor light fixtures. Replace burned out bulbs.

Paint your front door and trim.

Plant new container gardens by your front door.

Buy a new door mat.

Replace old house numbers with new ones or a classy plaque

Throughout Your House

Wallpaper

Lighting under cabinets and rope lighting over cabinets.

Re-grout tiles and caulking in bathroom and kitchen

Replace your faucets

Change hardware

Take down drapes to lighten up your interior.

Refinish floors with a fresh coat of varnish or paint them. Tiles can be painted with oil-based exterior paint.

Add Bead board paneling to hallways or kitchens and bathrooms even behind countertops.

Remove U shaped counter and replace with a free standing island.

Paint your cabinets.

Replace counter tops

Buy new appliances.

Living rooms and Family Rooms

Clean out your fireplace and replace with a decorative candle holder or birch logs.

Rearrange your furniture.

- Create new seating areas

- Bring furniture from another room

- Angle the sofa or an armoire

Clear off your book shelves and create a new display.

- Find a monochromatic theme stick to it.

- Use rattan baskets or trays to add texture and interest

- Leather books or cover books in paper

- Keep your colors consistent

Buy a new piece of art and new wall hangings.

Paint paneling creamy white or soft beige

Get rid of any floral arrangement that isn't a natural floral color. i.e. blue roses

Bathrooms

Clear off counters

Re Caulk

Get rid of wallpaper or replace with new texture rich coverings

Replace old dated shower doors with edgeless glass enclosures or pretty fabrics

Paint cabinets

Replace hardware and lighting

Buy new towels

Replace old floral arrangements with live plants or pots of green grass

Trade out rugs for sisal rugs

Bedrooms

Lighten up on the bedding

Linen

White ironed sheets

Less pillows, but do use great ones if you are using them

Update family pictures.

Make your frame match the room. Paint them if necessary

Reprint photos into black and white

Use stock size frames and enlarge prints.

Lighten up the windows with roman shades, bamboo roll ups, simple linen panels

Slipcover a chair or two.