

YOUR HOME

JULY
2013

TIPS AND TRENDS FOR HOMEOWNERS, BUYERS AND SELLERS

PICK A LOCK

As Americans hit the road this summer for vacation, would-be burglars are scoping out their next victim. Don't let it be you. Make sure your home is securely protected by the latest and greatest in locks. Some tips from *This Old House* hold the key.

Exterior doors: Thirty-four percent of break-ins happen at the front door, so make sure it has a dead bolt. Ranging from \$25 to \$300, they come in separate pieces (a dead bolt and a lock set) or a handle set that has both features. Two important parts to look for: a dead-locking latch bolt, which prevents entry by jimmying with a credit card, and hardened pins that can't be sawed. The best option in case of an emergency? A handle set that allows you to open the dead bolt and latch from inside in one motion.

Interior doors: You'll probably want a lock with a latch kickoff that keeps the door from closing behind you and with an emergency release that lets you open with a paperclip from the outside. Most range from \$8 to \$16.

Going keyless: Try locks for the digital age, which don't require a key but instead use a numeric code that slides open the bolt. But, if the batteries fail, you may need that key after all.



SHOW TIME

The "For Sale" sign is out front and the Open House is scheduled, but have you done everything inside and out to make potential buyers bite? Showing your home at its very best requires more than a little dusting and organizing. You'll need to help possible buyers imagine themselves living in your home, which means removing photos and some personal items. Find out how to prep your house for a successful showing with some tips from REALTOR.com.



First, get a head start on your packing and clear the clutter. Clear the sidewalk, lawn and curb, as well as windowsills and countertops. Don't just stuff items into your cabinets and closets. Store, donate or throw away items that you've accumulated. Moving large bookcases or other furniture into storage can also help buyers see the potential of each room. Organizing hidden spaces such as kitchen shelves and closets will also appeal to potential buyers

Do you have leaky faucets or holes in the wall? It's worth fixing those and other items such as cracked tiles and fussy drawers. Also, consider repainting rooms in neutral colors, such as beige or eggshell white. Let's face it: That bright orange bathroom isn't everyone's cup of tea. And, most importantly, clean your house from top to bottom, inside and out.

fast fact >> >> >> >> >> >>

On average, two out of five fires that are reported on the Fourth of July are because of fireworks.

Source: National Fire Protection Association



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COOL RUNNINGS



As last summer's record high temperatures proved, summer can be sticky and uncomfortable — and dangerous. It's prime time for heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke. But, take heart: There are some ways to. At the pool, on the street or inside your home, stay smart with these tips from MedicineNet.com.

Plan your outdoor workout routine for early mornings or late evenings, when the temperatures are cooler. If you must exercise during the heat of the day, walk instead of run and decrease the duration. Wearing loose clothing in a light color (cotton instead of synthetics) will also help keep you cool. Stave off dehydration with frequent sips of water or electrolyte-filled sports drinks, and

avoid caffeine and alcohol.

Speaking of cold beverages, consider putting some unconventional items in your fridge. A spray bottle filled with water can offer a cooling spritz to your face. Chilled lotions and cosmetic toners can rescue tired feet. Also, put some plastic bottles of water in the freezer to grab before you go back outdoors.

Fans, even when the air conditioning is on full-blast, can also help. No A/C? Head to a public place such as a shopping mall, public library or movie theater to stay cool.

Say Yes to CRS

Buying a home is one of the biggest and most emotional decisions you will ever make. So it's important to work with someone who can provide sound advice and a steady, guiding hand when you need it. That's why a CRS agent is the best person for the job.

A Certified Residential Specialist (CRS) is among the top 3 percent of all agents in the country. CRS agents have achieved a high volume of transactions and advanced training in areas such as business planning, real estate investing, marketing and technology. They must also maintain membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and abide by its Code of Ethics. Why work with anyone else when you can work with a CRS agent?



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DID YOU KNOW?



President Ronald Reagan labeled July as National Ice Cream Month in 1984.

Source: International Dairy Foods Association



Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home? Please mention my name.

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