

# 10 tips for...

PAIGE MARINO **writer**

## ( PREPPING YOUR HOME FOR SUMMER )

**Finally, summer has arrived** and it's time to add some flair to your home décor and outdoor spaces. Our tips will help you combine style with practicality for updated, cool, and comfortable summer living.

### **one** Keep fresh flowers

Nothing says summer like a beautiful bouquet of fresh cut flowers. Not only will they add color and creativity to your home, but the inviting scent will also be a constant reminder that summer has arrived. A vase full of deep coral dahlias or perfectly pink peonies makes a statement and welcomes your guests as soon as they walk through the door. Think about establishing your own cutting garden with perennials that will enhance your outside and inside spaces year after year.

### **two** Switch to lighter fabrics

Catherine Skaletsky of Catherine & McClure Interiors says that summer is all about being light and bright. "It's a long, long winter in New England," she says, "so bring in the light and airy and leave the heavy and dreary behind." Toss aside blankets, dark rugs, and heavy fabrics and switch to lighter, cooler textures like breezy linens and soft cottons. Mollie Johnson of Mollie Johnson

Interiors suggests that if you have a chair that needs a facelift, try re-covering it in a neutral linen with contrasting cream cording. She also suggests replacing last year's towels with new, monogrammed ones and investing in crisp, white sheets for the bedrooms. Sisal runners are a great addition to the kitchen or mudroom to add texture and a relaxed feel reminiscent of a beach cottage.

### **three** Let in the fresh air

Welcome summer by filling your home with fresh air. Swap out your heavy drapes for some gauze, linen, or even flowing chiffon window treatments and keep your windows open as often as you can. Studies show that fresh air helps people sleep better, so you can be well rested even after a day full of summer activities. Elizabeth Swartz of Elizabeth Swartz Interiors advises to have windows professionally cleaned at the beginning of the season in order to let the sunshine in on beautiful summer days.

### **four** Unclutter and rearrange

Elizabeth Swartz also suggests shifting around furniture to make the most of the summer months. "During the colder months we tend to arrange ourselves around the fireplace, television, or other interior spaces. For the warmer months I like to consider rearranging the orientation of the furniture and furnishings to the outdoors — our decks, porches, and beautifully landscaped yards."

### **five** Embrace the gloss

Catherine Skaletsky encourages clients to paint walls with high gloss paint to revitalize and add life to their homes. "For years it was flat walls, but now we go glossy," she says. "Higher gloss on trims and a nice sheen on the walls can really give the room a boost and give your color some depth and sparkle."

### **six** Add a splash of color

Changing color schemes is one of the easiest ways to get your home ready for summer. Embrace the hues of the



# 10 tips (CONTINUED)

season by transitioning to a bright blue, teal, or lime green color set. Mollie Johnson says that a small change like adding pops of color to a family room sofa with bright, fun pillows will make a big impression and instantly add a cheerful mood to your home. She also suggests buying new linen napkins in "a favorite bright or pastel color ... corals or orange, turquoise or robin's egg blue. Whatever colors make you happy."

## seven Try out your green thumb

Use this summer to revamp or revisit your garden and try growing your own vegetables. Some common vegetables to grow during June are cucumbers and corn, while peppers and green beans grow well in July.



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And don't forget the red, juicy, delicious tomatoes of late summer. For a fragrant and easy option, consider an herb garden right outside your kitchen door. Fresh basil, mint, thyme, rosemary, and chives are simple to grow and will enhance your summer recipes.

## eight Make sure all systems are go

Before summer heats up, it's important to ensure that your air conditioning units, sprinkler systems, and outside water faucets are working properly. Schedule appointments in the spring, as summer maintenance schedules fill up quickly. If there are any issues, you'll be grateful if you catch them early, before you break into a sweat trying to find an air conditioning repair person, along with the rest of your neighbors on a sweltering 95-degree day.

## nine Heat up the fire pit

A warm fire pit on a brisk night is a great setting for some family fun. Use your fire pit to keep guests cozy and add some ambiance. Outdoor throw pillows with floral or wave designs will keep your guests comfortable and relaxed. Your friends will certainly remember an evening spent roasting marshmallows while seated in classic wooden armchairs. You can also add a little sage to your fire pit to keep mosquitos and other bugs away.

## ten Get ready to grill

Cookouts are the perfect way to invite family and friends to your home. Make sure your grill is working properly and schedule a deep cleaning for better tasting food. Visit [www.MrGrill.net](http://www.MrGrill.net) for a list of services. Use bold serving trays for your sizzling steaks and sumptuous swordfish and decorated Mason jars for those indulgent summer beverages. Mollie Johnson says it's always a good idea to have a plastic folding table on hand for impromptu summer cookouts with friends. "Throw on a fun tablecloth and you're ready to have a party. With your new napkins, of course."



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Still-life with Oranges 32x32 oil on canvas

Renjeau Galleries  
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