



Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

Designing a Guest Room That Feels Like Home

Creating a welcoming guest room isn't just about providing a place to sleep—it's about helping visitors feel comfortable, cared for and relaxed during their stay. Start with a supportive mattress and soft, high-quality bedding. Add layers like blankets or throws so guests can adjust for their comfort. Neutral

colors with a few warm accents help create a calm and inviting atmosphere.

A well-appointed guest room goes beyond aesthetics. It should anticipate your guest's needs and offer thoughtful conveniences that make their stay feel effortless.

Include the following essentials:



1 Nightstand items: A clock, reading lamp and tissues



2 Toiletries: Travel-size shampoo, soap and toothpaste



3 Charging access: A visible outlet or power strip for devices



4 Luggage space: A bench or folding rack to unpack easily



5 Closet or drawer space: A few empty hangers or a shelf

Small personal touches—like a welcome note, snacks or a fresh flower—can go a long way in making someone feel at home. Keep the space tidy, avoid clutter and ensure everything is clean and in working order. A guest room designed with care and attention will leave your visitors feeling appreciated and at ease.

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How to Install Window Boxes for Instant Curb Appeal

Window boxes are an easy and charming way to add color, texture and personality to your home's exterior. They're ideal for small-space gardening or simply brightening up windows with seasonal blooms. Whether you opt for traditional wood, sleek metal or weather-resistant plastic, the key is ensuring a secure installation and thoughtful planting.

Choose a box that suits your home's architecture and window dimensions. Make sure it has drainage holes to prevent root rot and use a high-quality potting mix for healthy growth.

Installation basics include:

- ▶ **Measure and mark:** Mark bracket positions below the window using a level
- ▶ **Install brackets:** Use sturdy hardware to anchor into studs or masonry
- ▶ **Mount the box:** Attach the box to brackets firmly and check for stability
- ▶ **Add soil and plants:** Use a well-draining mix and arrange flowers with varying heights and color

Consider sun exposure when selecting plants—petunias, geraniums and trailing ivy work well in sunny spots, while impatiens or ferns thrive in shade. Water regularly, fertilize as needed and rotate with seasonal plants for year-round interest. Window boxes offer a big return with minimal effort, making them one of the easiest ways to boost curb appeal.



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How to Refinish Hardwood Floors

Refinishing hardwood floors can breathe new life into a worn-out room, restoring beauty and boosting home value. While it takes effort and planning, it's a manageable project for experienced DIYers or a worthwhile investment for professionals. The process involves sanding down the existing finish, addressing imperfections and applying a new protective coat.

Begin by clearing the room of furniture and thoroughly cleaning the floors. Inspect for nails, staples or debris that might interfere with sanding.

Refinishing steps include:

- ▶ **Prep and safety:** Remove rugs and cover vents to minimize dust
- ▶ **Sanding:** Use a drum sander with coarse, medium and fine grit passes
- ▶ **Edgework:** Use an edge sander where the large one can't reach
- ▶ **Vacuuming:** Clean thoroughly to remove every trace of dust
- ▶ **Staining (optional):** Apply stain evenly with a clean rag or applicator
- ▶ **Sealing:** Finish with a polyurethane or water-based sealant

Drying time varies by product, but expect at least 24–48 hours before walking on the floor. Avoid moving furniture back for several days. Proper prep, patience and ventilation are essential for a smooth result. When done right, refinished hardwood floors can look brand new and last for decades.



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