



Welcome Spring in Your Home

Simple Ways Katy Homeowners Can Add a Touch of Spring Time

Don't blink or you will miss it...spring time in Katy travels at lightning speed. We Katyites only have a short time to get bit by the spring cleaning bug and get ready for the smoldering summer that is rapidly approaching. There is something about spring that makes people want to de-clutter, clean-up, and spruce up their homes. Spring might even feel more like a new beginning than the new year does for some. For those of us who catch more allergies in spring than cleaning bugs, Katy Magazine has rounded up some springtime inspiration to help us all along.

Out With the Old and In With the New

Spring is a great time to go through every inch of your home and get rid of anything and everything that you haven't used in a year. Donate clothes that don't fit, toys your kids have outgrown, books

you will never read again, and anything that hasn't been used during the past year. We have a tendency to get so used to having some things around, that we almost don't see them anymore. Now is a good time to think about how you live in your home and what you actually use. "Spring season brings about an internal urge to toss the old and bring in the new," says De Colburn of Seven Meadows. "That's why every spring, my boys and I go through all of their clothes and toys, to make room for the new things they get to wear and play with in spring and summer. Although for them, it's all about gearing up and getting ready for the mad rush to buy equipment for the spring sports season."

Spring Cleaning is a Family Affair



Getting the outside of the home back into shape can be a fun family affair with a little team work

Cleaning and clearing inside of the house requires military like actions. Enlist the whole family to spruce up, clear out, and reevaluate how you will be living in your home over the warmer months of the year. Pick a room to start in and do not leave that room until you are finished. Bring garbage bags, a couple of boxes, and all of your cleaning products into the room with you before you start.

As you are cleaning, go through things to donate (box), things to throw away (garbage bag) and things to put somewhere else in the house (box). Be ruthless! Do not keep anything that is not beautiful, useful, or loved. "I usually tackle one room at a time which may take a day or two.



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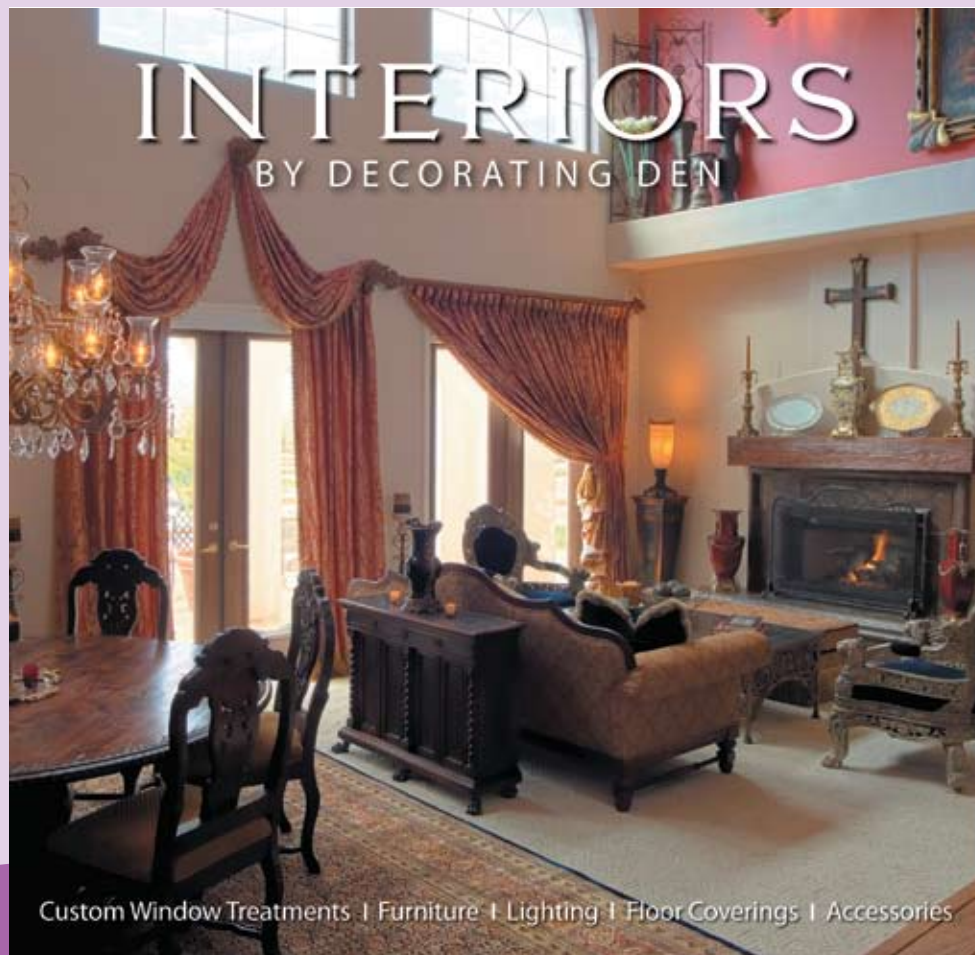
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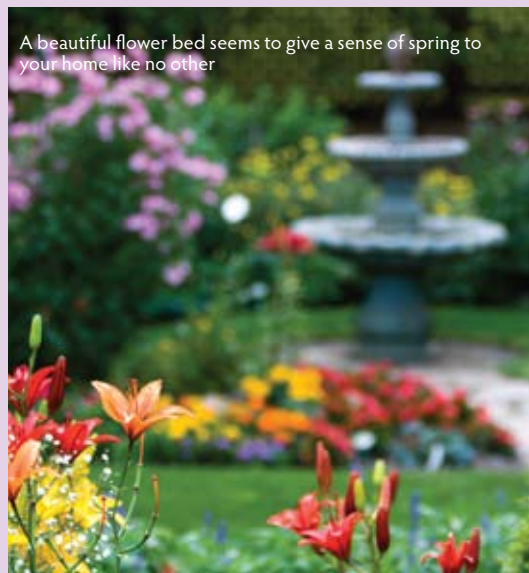


A simple change like swapping out dark pillows for lighter brighter ones seems to bring a little springtime sunshine into your home

The whole project usually takes two weeks to get it done right,” says Jeanmarie Mayfield, a mother of two from Katy. You can also turn your clutter into cash by holding a garage sale and use the money to buy something fun for spring like new plants or outdoor sports equipment.

Replace and Renew

It is also time to replace the filters and change the batteries in the smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Clear and rearrange the closets so that your warmer clothes, shoes, and accessories are easily reached. Pack away the parkas and box up the winter boots to make room for the flip-flops and swimsuits.



A beautiful flower bed seems to give a sense of spring to your home like no other

Get rid of anything that you have not worn in a year. Clean out your refrigerator and pantry and stock up on light snacks that are within easy reach.

Lighten and Brighten

For springtime décor for not a lot of dough, you can swap out dark throw pillows with lighter ones or slip on a slipcover to brighten up your living room. Remove heavy rugs and “live in the bare” during the warmer months of the year. Pull out your shells from vacations past and pair them with some white candles to make a gorgeous tablescape for your coffee or dining room tables. “One new picture or accessory can change the whole house with a domino effect. Sometimes things work better in one room than the other.” says Mayfield.

Outside of the House

Getting ready for spring includes the outdoor living spaces as well. Schedule a family garage clean out to get sports equipment, pool supplies, gardening tools, and camping equipment organized so you have nothing in the way of springtime fun. Clean or replace outdoor furniture and while you are at it, set up a beautiful outdoor dining space to enjoy meals with the family al fresco. Buy some melamine dishes and brightly colored plastic cups to make your table pop for spring. While you are at it, scrub down the grill for those backyard bar-b-ques with the neighbors. It is also a good time to remove the winter-looking haze off of the windows both inside and out with a good cleaning.

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Spring Cleaning's Top 10 Getting Your House Ready for Spring

- 1 Vacuum mattresses with the hose on your vacuum cleaner. This will suck up those nasty dust mites that make you sneeze. Also, vacuum under the beds.
- 2 Change the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Change the air filters in all of the rooms.
- 3 Clean all of the baseboards and decorative moldings.
- 4 Vacuum draperies and rugs or take them outside for a good shake. Take them to the cleaners if they are in need of a professional cleaning.
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- 6 Arrange a spring inspection of your cooling system to make sure it is ready for summer.
- 7 Vacuum draperies and rugs or take them outside for a good shake. Take them to the cleaners if they are in need of a professional cleaning.
- 8 Remove dead winter foliage and replace with pretty spring plants. Check outdoor furniture for repairs or painting.
- 9 Clean fan blades, light fixtures, and wall hangings.
- 10 Don't forget to clean out your refrigerator and freezer. Vacuum behind and underneath.

10 Minute

Spring Decorating Tricks

- Rotate artwork and hang up art with a lighter palette. Pack away darker photos and paintings.
- Swap out spicy candles like cinnamon and cranberry with crisp, clean springtime scents.
- Buy some cheap, brightly colored flowers and place them in vases around the home.
- Remove heavy comforters and replace them with lightweight quilts and bedspreads.
- Replace heavy drapes with sheers.
- Clean up patio and set up an outdoor dining area complete with a centerpiece or tablescape, placemats, and candles.
- Clean your windows so that you can see the outside more clearly.

Freshen or Fix it Up

Walk around the grounds of your house and make a list of things that need fixing, replacing, or painting. Inspect the roof for damage and clean out the gutters. To keep your air conditioning running smooth, you might want to schedule a springtime evaluation and get your Freon level checked to keep growing electric bills down. Trim the dead foliage from landscaping and replace any decrepit plants with snappy new springtime flowers. Spring is also the time to plant a vegetable or herb garden that will keep you eating fresh all summer long. Tomatoes, peppers, and herbs grow wonderfully in Katy. Bring in some new mulch to spruce up your flowerbeds and make sure to fertilize the lawn so that the grass is healthy and green.

Spring is such a short season in Katy and it is the perfect time to get your house ready for the long, humid summers we all know and love so much. In revamping, cleaning, and clearing out your home, a feeling of calm will more than likely take over. This is a wonderful feeling to have before we get into the lazy mindset of summer, when cleaning is the last thing on our minds. After you have finished, buy yourself some pretty flowers, make some lemonade, sit back, and enjoy the view in your freshly spring-cleaned home. Happy spring! **KM**

Jennifer Dolcefino was the editor of our sister publication, Sugar Land Magazine, until her recent move to Katy with her family. She is married and has two children, ages 7 and 10. She is now a writer for Katy Magazine.

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