

HOME & GARDEN

FALL 2012



Scent of the Season



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PUMPKIN BREAD WILL FILL YOUR HOME WITH THE FLAVOR, AROMA OF AUTUMN

When fall arrives and pumpkins galore pop up from the ground, it's time to think about making this nutrient rich veggie a part of your diet.

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 c. sugar
4 egg whites
1/2 c. canola oil
7 1/2 oz. canned pumpkin
1/3 c. water
1 1/2 c. flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1/2 tsp. allspice

To make pumpkin bread, simply mix the sugar, egg whites, canola oil, canned pumpkin and 1/3 cup of water together in a bowl until all the ingredients are well integrated.

Add the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice and stir to blend.

Pour the mixture into an 8-by 11-inch greased baking pan and let the bread cook in a pre-heated 350-degree oven for 50

minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean after inserting it into the center of the bread.

Since pumpkin bread has a subtly sweet flavor and can pass for cake as well as bread, enjoy this delicious treat before or after dinner.

Spread cream cheese on pumpkin bread for additional flavor. Press chopped walnuts into the cream cheese for more texture.

How to Fix a Screen Door

IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK, AND IT ONLY TAKES ONE TOOL

Many exterior doors have a screen, glass or combination door on the outside to allow air or light in if you want to leave the main door open.

These doors are generally made of aluminum and have one or two automatic closers attached to them. Over time, the automatic closer can get out of adjustment causing either the door to slam shut or worse, never close completely.

A door that won't close completely is defeating the purpose, and a door that constantly slams shut can cause other components to break or get out of adjustment.

Fortunately, adjusting these

doors is fairly simple. All that is required is a screwdriver.

First, open the door all the way. On the rod that connects the closer to the door, there is a small washer. If you move the washer against the closer, it will stay open in that position. If your door doesn't have this feature, just take a pair of locking pliers and clamp them to the rod next to the closer mechanism. This will serve the same purpose.

PIN POSITION

On the other side of the closer, where it attaches to the door, there is a small pin which holds the closer in one of three positions. Try moving that pin to the other positions and see if that helps. If it is still not perfect, just leave it in the position that works the best.

ADJUSTMENT

On the end of the closer barrel, there is a small adjustment screw.

Turn the screw a quarter of a turn in either direction and test the closer.

If this makes the problem better, continue making small adjustments and testing after each adjustment. If the first test is worse, then turn it back a quarter turn in the opposite direction.

Continue making small adjustments and testing until the door closes completely without slamming shut. If your door has two closers, make the same adjustments on both.



Make a Fall Table Runner

As the brightness of summer begins to fade and autumn is slowly ushered in, it's time to warm up your décor in anticipation of cooler weather and the holidays.

Simple yet elegant fabric crafts are a great way to create home décor items that can be changed with the seasons.

Requiring very few materials, a fireplace mantle scarf or table runner is an easy way to personalize your autumn décor.

MATERIAL

- Fall-themed fabric (make sure it is washable)
- Light to medium weight fusible interfacing
- Scissors
- Sewing machine
- Thread to match fabric
- Measuring tape
- Tassel or decorative edging (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Measure the finished size of your mantel scarf or table runner. Be sure to take into consideration how far you would like your scarf or runner to drape off of the edge, if at all. Add one inch to your finished measurement on all sides.

Cut one piece of interfacing and two

pieces of your chosen fabric the finished size of your craft plus one inch.

Fuse interfacing to the wrong side of one of your fabric rectangles.

Place fabric right sides together and sew a 1/2-inch seam around the entire perimeter, leaving enough space on one of the long sides to turn your runner inside out.

After sewing, cut the corners diagonally and trim seams to 1/4 inch.

Turn it inside out. Press. Topstitch all the way around the runner with a straight or decorative stitch. Alternatively, you could embellish your runner by sewing on braid or other decorative trim.

Add decorative tassels to the four corners if desired.

Both sides of the scarf or runner can be made from the same fabric, or you can add versatility by using contrasting fabric.

You can even make your craft perform double duty by making one side with a fall-themed fabric and the other with a Christmas print.

With so many wonderful vibrant fall fabrics to choose from, making personalized home décor items has never been so easy and rewarding.

Replace Bathroom Caulking

Showers and tub surrounds need caulk in the corners and next to the tub. Over time, this caulk can crack or become dirty and mildewed. Replacing the caulk will go a long way to making the shower look cleaner and brighter.

This simple procedure is something most homeowners can accomplish with a minimum amount of time or money.

Only a few simple tools and materials are required:

- Putty knife
- Utility knife
- Tub and tile caulk
- Rag

PREPARATION

Remove the old caulk. Push the utility knife under the edges of the caulk where the shower panels meet. This will cut the old caulk away from the edges. Use the pointed edge of the putty knife to scrape the loose caulk away.

NEW CAULKING

Cut the tip of the caulk tube. Place the tip of the tube into the joint between two panels and begin applying slow and steady pressure as you push the tube up the joint. Constant pressure is the key to a uniform caulk bead. Be careful not to

apply too much as this will make cleanup difficult.

SMOOTH THE FINISH

Dampen the rag and your finger. Use your finger to drag across the caulk. This will smooth the finish and force the edge of the bead into the shower panels. Wipe your finger often with the wet rag to prevent buildup.

TIPS

A few tips to remember while caulking the shower:

— Silicone caulk will make a more permanent and mildew resistant caulk job, but it is also harder to handle and clean up.

— Cut the tip of the caulk tube at an angle for easier application. Keep the diameter of the hole about the size of a wire coat hanger.

— Make sure there are no gaps or voids in the finished caulk job. This can allow water to get behind the panels and deteriorate the framing and drywall.



Lighten Up

HOW TO BRIGHTEN A DARK ROOM

Dark rooms are dingy and depressing. They can take a serious toll on your mood and aren't very fun to hang out in.

Unfortunately, some people's homes are naturally plagued by poor lighting. Luckily though, it isn't too hard at all to lighten up even the darkest room and make it a more welcoming place to be.

Here are five ways to brighten up a dark room and make it a more cheerful and comfortable place to spend time in.

REPLACE YOUR BULBS

Some bulbs are better than others. If you are having a serious "dark room" problem, then you might want to go around and replace all of the room's light bulbs.

Compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) are usually a good place to start. Their light is brighter, plus they use less energy.

OPEN YOUR SHADES

If you're bummed about your dark room and your shades aren't open, then what are you doing? Open those shades!

Natural light is one of the absolute best fixes for a dark room. If you are worried about privacy, adding translucent curtains or blinds will give you more light without giving all of those snooping eyes somewhere to look.

USE MIRRORS

Mirrors can make a room feel much larger, and a feeling of confined smallness is something that actually makes a

room feel darker. Adding a few mirrors is an easy way of making any room feel larger and more open. Plus, they refract light from other sources — especially windows.

PAINT YOUR WALLS

Possibly the most drastic way to brighten up a room, but also the most effective, painting your walls can make an immediate difference in how your room feels.

Spend some time looking at colors and ask an expert for help if you have to. As long as you choose the right color, a new paint job will brighten and liven up your room, cover icky dings and scratches, and make your other furniture and decorations pop!

Once you know what you're doing, brightening up a dark room isn't hard at all.



Fall Beauty in the Landscape

For many of us, flowers bring to mind visions of summer in full bloom.

It's true that many annuals, perennials and groundcovers reach their peak beauty during the warmest months of the year. But there are abundant varieties of plants that put on a breathtaking display during the fall, either because they are late bloomers or else because their summer colors shift to other vibrant hues as winter approaches.

Knowing which plants provide such a late-season spectacle can help you to plan a garden or landscape that is still bursting with color and life long after the summer blooms have gone to bed.

FLOWERS

The green leaves of the willow blue star, a delicate perennial, turn golden towards the end of its life cycle. Cosmos will retain their colors, which may be pink, red, or white, from mid-summer through fall.

If you prefer yellow and orange flowers, consider the related yellow cosmos.



PHOTO: IOFOTO / YAYMICRO.COM

Beautiful New York asters parade in hues of white, blue, purple, and pink, for weeks after summer's end. Boltonia, whose flowers resemble a daisy's, can bring late season clouds of white or pink to the border of your garden.

Showy stonecrop is another perennial that puts on a beautiful display in the fall, when its pink flowers deepen into crimson.

SHRUBS

There are several varieties of shrubs that put on a special performance in the autumn

months. One of the Japanese barberry cultivars, known as Red Pillar, displays a mass of reddish-purple leaves late in the season. When these fall, you can see the red fruits on its branches.

The white fringe tree — which can be considered a large shrub — produces beautiful yellow foliage. When the American yellowwood loses its fragrant white flowers at summer's end, you can still look forward to its leaves turning a dazzling yellow.

The lush green of the oak-leaved hydrangea turns a deep red in autumn. If you're

ambitious enough to plant trees for fall effects, consider the amur maple, whose green leaves turn orange or red in early fall, and kousa dogwood, a small tree that displays striking red foliage.

CONSIDER CLIMATE

Not all of the flowers, shrubs and trees listed here may be able to thrive amidst the climatic conditions that prevail in your area. The average low and high temperatures of the region should be taken into account before you

choose any plants for your landscape.

Plant books and catalogs will contain recommended temperature zones for various varieties, but the most reliable way to assure yourself that the plants you introduce to your yard will survive beyond the first year is to take note of the kinds that are already thriving in your area.

Certain regions may be renowned for their fall foliage, but the truth is that nearly every locale boasts some varieties of plants that have something special to offer us late in the season.

The Power of Color

If you're longing for a change but can't afford to remodel or buy new furniture, look no further than the paint department of your local home improvement store.

A new color scheme can transform a room. Paint is the least expensive — but not the only — way to achieve this transformation.

VERSATILE USES

A fresh coat of paint will breathe new life into your walls, for sure, but don't restrict yourself to only painting the walls. It is much less expensive to update old kitchen cabinets with paint than to have them refinished or to replace the doors.

For a custom look, paint the legs of your kitchen table and the chairs the same hue as the cabinets. Add chair cushions and a window topper in a coordinating fabric and your "remodel" is complete.

APPLIANCES

Old appliances that still work well but don't match one another can be painted as well. Most places that paint cars will paint appliances, too.

The front panel of many automatic dishwashers reverses to a different color. If the panel is damaged, you can spray paint it or cover it with fabric.

FABRIC

To change the look of a room without the trouble and mess of painting, use fabric. To instantly redecorate a kitchen, for example, change the curtains, spread a colorful cloth on the table, slipcover the chairs, and swap out the accessories with those in other



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rooms to complete the transformation.

If your dog rips the upholstery on your living room sofa, cover it with a slipcover. These are not cheap, but they are much less expensive than reupholstering or replacing your couch.

Slipcovers are available in a wide

range of colors and styles. Most stores only carry a few styles, so you may have to look around a while until you find something that really complements your space.

BEDROOMS

A dramatic change can be achieved

in the bedroom by dressing the bed and windows in a rich color that contrasts strongly with the color of the walls.

Match the bedding and window dressing to the walls for a calming, ultra-modern look.

A new look is as close as a length of fabric or a can of paint.