

Let Color Bring Life to Your House

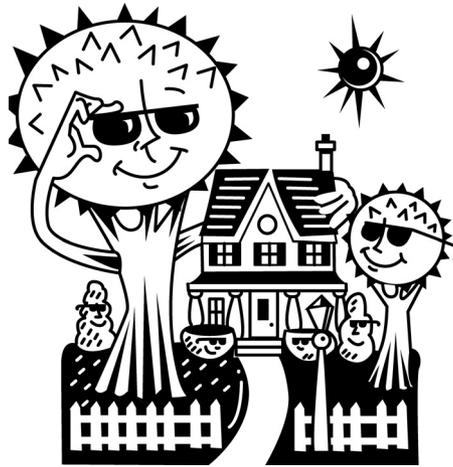
Embrace the color of the season this spring and give your rooms a lift with a new coat of paint.

Color not only brings life to a room but can change the entire mood. Give your living room a homey feel or wake up your tired kitchen by choosing a color to match the mood you want.

Warm colors—like reds, oranges, yellows and browns—are stimulating and can add mystery or drama to a room. Cool colors—like blue, green and lavender—are calming and soothing.

Before you start painting, make sure you seal any cracks or holes and caulk around windows and doors so heated or air-conditioned air won't leak out.

Keep the job simple, especially if you plan on updating the entire house. Invest in an electric paint roller. Buy one with an extension handle for ceilings and smaller



attachments for trim. Come summer, the paint roller can be used to stain your deck or porch as well.

Tap into your favorite mood with these tips:

- Choose red for kitchens or offices. The color is stimulating and raises your heartbeat for a jump-start in the morning.

- Green is soothing and is used in color therapy to treat depression or anxiety. Use it in your favorite space to relax. It is also a good transition color for hallways and smaller rooms.

- Blue is meditative, restful and will help clear your head. Try it for your bedroom.

- Yellow is energizing and a great mood-lifter. Try it in the bathroom to help you wake up in the morning. Beware, though: Too much yellow can be agitating and is known to upset babies.

- Light colors are reflective and make a room seem brighter and bigger.

- Pair dark colors with a light trim, since dark colors make a room seem smaller.

- Don't limit color to walls. Colorful throw pillows, drapes, vases and other accessories can enhance the mood of your room. ■

Lighting Makes the Perfect Grad Gifts

Invited to a graduation party this spring? Give grads a practical gift they can thank you for when the long hours of college studying begin in the fall.

Poor dorm lighting often gives the feel of a classroom rather than a living room, and students have enough of that during the day. Choose from a variety of desk and room lamps to help graduates feel at home even when they are studying far away.

Halogen desk lamps are more energy efficient than regular incandescent lamps, and they last longer, too. The bright, concentrated light is good for studying.

Choose a snazzy style, like one with a bendable stand or one that doubles as a reading lamp that can be attached to a bed.

Another popular option is a torchiere lamp with a fluorescent bulb. A nice floor lamp will create ambience in the room, and improvements in fluorescent lights have made them softer and more pleasing.

Some lamps feature dimming switches, making the lights useful for both studying and relaxing.

These lamps will save energy and they last longer, so your grad won't have to go to the store every few weeks to buy replacement bulbs. ■

