

**5-YEAR
FIX-IT-ALL
WARRANTY**

**HOME AND GARDEN
TIPS FOR EVERY SEASON**

WHEN YOU NEED ROOM

 **Cook**
PORTABLE WAREHOUSES®

SINCE 1984

FOR YOUR STUFF®

HOME AND GARDEN TIPS FOR EVERY SEASON

As the seasons change, the to-do list around your home also changes and often grows. Those seasonal tasks, chores and necessities can often bring stress and worry. But it doesn't have to be like that!

You can stay prepared for all those seasonal musts with this guide from Cook Portable Warehouses! At Cook, our priority is the customer and how we can improve and simplify their lives.

We will take you through the year with tips, tricks and creative ideas to keep your home sparkling clean, save you money on your utility bills, cut down on the clutter, get organized and keep your garden blooming!

SPRING

PLACES TO EMPHASIZE WHILE SPRING CLEANING

One of the staples of March, April and May is the ongoing task of spring cleaning. To make it easier, remember these areas to focus on while cleaning and organizing your home this spring.

1. Organize drawers and cabinets

Declutter one drawer, cupboard or cabinet every day until the whole house is done. Think about getting rid of things like mismatched plastic to-go containers, old or stained towels, non-working pens, out-of-date magazines, etc.

2. Clean out your medicine cabinet

Your medicine cabinet is an area that should be organized by someone routinely. For prescription and over-the-counter medications, check the expiration dates. Read the guidelines set by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) about safe disposal or look into take-back programs at pharmacies in your area.

3. Recycle/shred papers

Papers including magazines, newspapers, paperwork, old bills, take-out menus, junk mail, calendars, receipts, etc. tend to pile up. So recycle anything you don't need and file the rest. Anything with personal information should be shredded for extra security.

SPRING

SPRINGTIME IDEAS TO GET RID OF CLUTTER

Throughout the long winter, clutter tends to pile up in your home. Use these creative ways to pare down your stuff and create more space.

1. Sell your stuff

eBay is a great place to sell smaller things like electronics, souvenir items, clothing, accessories, etc. Make some easy money selling those items that are just sitting in boxes cluttering up your home. Share items via social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter with a picture and description.

2. Donate things

Giving back is always a good idea so really think if you need something and use it routinely. Those old clothes, toys and household items could help someone else in need. Donate to the Salvation Army, Goodwill or a local thrift store.

3. Re-gift

Re-gifting is a great way to purge your home of those items that are still new and in the package but don't fit into your lifestyle. Think about the person first and see if you have anything on hand that fits their interests or personality. Remember, you want to give them something they actually want.

SPRING

HOW TO SAVE MONEY AT HOME THIS SPRING

With warmer weather coming up, it's the perfect time to reevaluate your home's energy needs and find creative ways to save money. Use these inventive ideas to make your house more efficient.

1. Caulk external openings

Caulk any gaps around windows or doors that are larger than the size of a nickel. Add weatherstripping around doors, so you can't see daylight from inside your home. And check to see if the tracks on your sliding doors are clean, so gaps aren't created.

2. Clean window units

Clean your air conditioning window unit by removing the front grill and air filter and cleaning off any dust or dirt. This helps the unit work at the optimal level to better keep your family cool. Routine changing of air filters (2-4 times per year) can net you 10-15 percent in energy savings.

3. Wash window panes

The cleaner your windows are the more light will shine into your home. Before you wash your windows, clean out the sills and window tracks with a soft brush or vacuum attachment. Brighten up your home without having to turn on a bunch of lights. But don't forget to dust light bulbs too.

SUMMER

HOW TO GET ORGANIZED THIS SUMMER

Summer means lots of fun things like vacations and family time but it also means a lot more stuff in your home and yard cluttering it up. Here are some simple ways to keep your life organized throughout the summer months.

1. Use bins for summer shoes

There is one shoe of summer and it's the flip flop. But these light weight, versatile shoes will end up everywhere in your home, including by the doors, in the kitchen and on bedroom floors. So, grab a large colorful plastic bin, attach a sticker or sign that says "flip flops" and leave it by the front door.

2. Clean your grill tools

Summer is the time for family barbecues but with all that use your grilling tools can get a little dirty. So don't just leave them outside after a delicious dinner. Use a bin or bucket with a handle to hold tools. Then, you can just carry them all inside to wash and dry them at one time.

3. Prepare to-go kits

A lot of summertime is spent on the go with outdoor activities, lessons, camps, vacations, etc. So a great way to stay organized is to fill small plastic bags with essential supplies for different activities. These could include first aid kits, items for the pool, camping trip and activities/games for travel. Then, just grab them whenever you need them.

SUMMER

WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR ENERGY BILLS THIS SUMMER

With those sweltering outdoor temperatures of summer, it's the time when your home's energy costs skyrocket. Use these ideas to reevaluate your current practices, make your house more efficient and help find creative ways to save money.

1. Be smart about your thermostat

Set your air conditioner thermostat at a temperature that is comfortable and try to keep it there. A good recommendation is around 78 degrees while your family is home and around 85 degrees when you are away from the house. And remember you will save about 7 percent off your bill for every degree over 78 degrees.

2. Keep hot air out

You want to keep your inside as cool as possible so try to minimize the amount of heat that gets trapped indoors from your appliances. Avoid turning on incandescent lighting and try to use your outdoor grill or smaller countertop appliances instead of your oven or stove whenever possible. If you do cook inside, use the exhaust fan to get rid of hot air.

3. Think before using appliances

If you have to run large appliances like the washer, dryer or dishwasher, do it at night and let things air dry. Wash all clothes in cold water and remember to clean out the lint tray after every load. Take lukewarm showers or baths rather than hot ones to reduce the amount of humid air in the bathroom.

SUMMER

OUTDOOR TRENDS TO REMEMBER THIS SUMMER

One of the best parts of the summer season is enjoying your outside space while the weather is warm. To ensure your yard is ready for anything you need including relaxing, dining or entertaining, here are some helpful trends.

1. Go green

Going green in your garden includes using organic plants and recycled materials such as permeable pavers and crushed rock for better drainage, planting things that encourage insects and wildlife and using a reduced area of your lawn.

2. Stock up on containers

Pots, flower boxes and troughs filled with annuals, perennials, shrubs, etc. are a smart way to keep you garden blooming with minimal maintenance. The best choices are wood, clay, concrete or steel. Choose bright colors to add some pizzazz to small, narrow spaces like a driveway or patio.

3. Get comfortable furniture

Choosing the right outdoor furniture is important because people spend more time outside especially in the summer months. It's a great place to dine, entertain or just relax, so pick weatherproof cushioned couches, sectionals or chairs.

FALL

IMPORTANT HOME MAINTENANCE TASKS FOR FALL

Here are some simple home maintenance tasks that will help get your home ready for fall.

1. Clean the gutters

Before the leaves begin to fall, clean your gutters out and cover them with a mesh guard. Then, after most of the leaves have fallen, wash the gutters and downspouts again and flush them with water.

2. Inspect windows/doors

Check and seal any gaps around your home's windows and door frames. This is one of the easiest and most cost effective ways to get your home ready and will help lower your heating costs.

3. Repair walkways

Fall is the time to fix or fill-in damaged walkways, driveways and steps. Check for cracks more than 1/8-inch wide, uneven or loose sections, disintegration of asphalt and washed-out materials.

FALL

KEY DON'TS WHEN FALL CLEANING

Avoid these costly mistakes when you're working on seasonal organizing this fall and you'll be successful.

1. Don't tackle too much

The best way is to block off 2-3 hours or choose one room at a time. This will increase your overall efficiency and get the task done quicker.

2. Don't jump around

Put everything into categories such as store, donate, recycle and toss and then take those items to their designated places.

3. Don't buy first

The smart choice is to wait and buy supplies after you have completed the process. Then, you can measure your space and decide what type of containers you need.

FALL

TOP GARDEN MAINTENANCE TASKS FOR FALL

Check out our important things to do in the fall to have a beautiful, blooming garden this spring.

1. Get beds and get plants ready

Add a layer of compost or manure to all your garden beds. Then, start cutting back perennials and all diseased portions of your foliage.

2. Remember to water

Water your trees and shrubs until the ground freezes and double the amount of water for newly planted vegetation.

3. Prepare equipment for storage

Clean out all your gardening supplies like planters, bird feeders and cold frames. Sand and oil your tools and store them safely.

WINTER

MAKE SURE YOUR HOME IS WINTER READY

Remember these key ways to get and keep your home prepared for that gloomily, chilly winter weather.

1. Prepare the plumbing

Drain the water from outdoor faucets and garden hoses and arrange to have in-ground sprinkler pipes blown out. Check all pipes and use heat tape on any problematic ones that have frozen over in the past.

2. Seal any leaks

Check all weather stripping around windows and doors and replace or fix any that have worn down. Fix all those entry points with caulk to keep the cold air out, keep your home warmer and decrease energy costs.

3. Check heating sources

Have your fireplace inspected yearly by a professional. Check all furnace filters and change any that are dirty and need replacing. Remember to replace them at least once a month during the winter.

WINTER

HOW TO GET YOUR KITCHEN WINTER READY

The kitchen is the busiest room of the house during the wintertime with cooking, dining and entertaining so you want the space to be ready for anything.

1. Stock the pantry

It's smart to be prepared for the unknowns of winter weather by stocking up on canned and dry goods. Make sure to organize these items by type and put those with the earliest expiration dates closer to the front.

2. Clean out the fridge

Pull out all the drawers and put any wilted fruits and veggies into the trash or compost pile. Clean out all those drawers with a mixture of dish detergent and warm water. Group similar things together, so it will be easier to find them throughout the season.

3. Update your recipes

Go through your recipes books to refresh your memory on those wintertime family favorites. Planning these meals ahead of time allows you to stock up on those additional ingredients and spices and ensure that all your supplies and equipment are ready to go.



WINTERTIME STORAGE TIPS FOR YOUR CLOTHES

Room in your closets is always at a premium especially with the space necessary for all those wintertime accessories. So here are some tips to safely store all those spring and summer clothes until you need them again.

1. Wash everything

It's critical to wash or dry clean all your clothes before you store them. Those lingering oils from deodorant, perfume, etc. can discolor fabric over time and allow any overlooked stains to have a chance to set in.

2. Use smart storage techniques

The right type of storage container is essential to keep your spring and summer clothes in the best shape. Use plastic storage or fabric bins to store clean clothes. Zippered or vacuum bags are also a secure place to protect clothing from bugs.

3. Pack and label things

Neatly fold and place items into designated containers. T-shirts, shorts and skirts should be folded with the heaviest fabrics on the bottom. Once everything is packed and properly organized, label each container based on its contents.

For more home organization and storage tips during every season, check out the informative and fun [Cook blog!](#)

WINTER

www.CookPortableWarehouses.com