



Welcome

To The Front Porch

CONNIE HERZOG HOMES

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JUST FOR FUN

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Window Dressing

If you have limited garden space or just want to dress up your home's exterior, consider adding a few window boxes. Filled with bright flowers, colorful foliage, and trailing vines, window boxes will instantly add the charm and beauty you've been looking for without much effort or expense. You'll enjoy them from the inside of your home as well, with flower tops peeking up from the window frame and the fragrant blossoms scenting your home when you open the window. Window boxes overflowing with flowers are beautiful, but culinary herbs are a popular choice; too, for their beauty, scent, and convenience. They thrive in smaller

spaces with good drainage. When available choose dwarf varieties. They'll fit nicely in a window box, including miniature thymes, com-



pact oregano, dwarf sage, and small forms of parsley, basil, chives, and dill. Consider the amount of sunlight the plants will

receive throughout the day and select your plants accordingly. To get your windows properly dressed, all you need is a container, all-purpose potting soil, and compatible plants and foliage. Don't feel like you have to confine your window box to a rectangle wood container. Be creative, just remember that large containers filled with soil are heavy. Whatever material you choose, it should be rot-resistant (you can add a plastic liner to a wooden box) and strong. A flimsy container will sag and can even break under the weight of wet soil. As an alternative, fill the window box with several smaller flower pots for lighter weight and to make rearranging the plants easier.

Use an all-purpose potting soil with a mix of sphagnum peat moss, which helps retain moisture.

Keep your boxes looking healthy and well-kept by giving the plants the attention they need. Dead-head as needed to encourage

new blooms – it only takes a minute and gives you an opportunity to admire your work and check for potential problems. Water often, especially if the eaves block rainfall or if you live in a particularly dry climate. When selecting plants, you'll want to choose flowers and foli-

age that complement each other. Include plants native to your region; they're adapted to your local climate and will benefit pollinators. Avoid modern hybrid flowers, especially those with "doubled" flowers, which have been cross-pollinated to enhance the flowers but often lack the

Welcome spring with this fresh issue. Learn how to instantly beautify and add charm to your home with the tried and true window box. Spring is a popular time to move. With low inventory and a multitude of buyers this may be the perfect time to upsize, downsize or sell it all and travel the world! Cheers!



Window Dressing *continued*

pollen, nectar, and fragrance that pollinators need. Keep in mind that the color scheme should be understated. A window box can accommodate two or three colors before it looks overbearing and haphazard. Plants can be staggered and placed closer together instead of placed in uniform rows, and you can create more impact by placing tall, upright plants in back with trailing plants tumbling over the container. A window box is the ultimate do-it-yourself project.

They're easy to make and require only basic tools to construct. Most materials can be purchased from your local home improvement store – many available in pre-cut sizes. If you have a deck, attach a window box to the railing; it's another opportunity to add color and warmth to your home. When purchasing plants, remember to ask for pollinator-friendly ones, and keep them that way by avoiding pesticide sprays. Soon you'll enjoy visitors of the

fluttering kind – butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds – making your window boxes that much more enjoyable and beautiful!

Lighting The Way

Successful landscaping takes careful planning to ensure your property looks its best. One feature often overlooked is outdoor lighting. Whether

you're looking to guide footsteps along a path or add the distinction to your yard and garden, tall post lanterns are a functional, stylish feature for your landscaping. Post lanterns are available in a wide variety of designs, sizes, and colors. From the traditional black lantern-style to a light mounted on a natural finish wooden post, landscaping lanterns are an attractive way to illuminate driveways, walkways, and patios. They allow you to enjoy the garden late into the evening, especially if you spend a great deal of time outdoors or host gatherings in your yard. When making your choice, consider a solar-powered



lamp. They offer an easy installation that's practically mess-free. With no wiring required, it'll save you money throughout its life, too. They come in a variety of styles and materials. Place it anywhere the sun shines. Choose a post that complements your landscaping style. Then decide what landscaping features you most want to highlight. Remember, outdoor lighting should be functional, yet subtle. Too much lighting will overpower your landscaping. As you choose your outdoor lighting, select fixtures that look as good during the day as they do at night when they're aglow.

“Spend as much time and effort on the outside of your home as the inside. Curb appeal is your visitor’s first impression of your home.”

Connie Herzog
HOMES

A Perfect Stroke



Warming weather is the perfect time to tackle that indoor painting project you've been putting off. When looking at your painting tools, remember that a good quality

brush is considered the most important tool for appearance, texture and coverage. Look for these characteristics in a brush: • Full and thick bristles longer than the width of the brush. • A fine tapered edge that's thicker at the bottom and narrower at the top for stiffness and control. • Tipped bristles that feel soft and smooth when stroked across your hand gives better coverage, a smoother texture and sharper lines. • Stainless steel ferrule that is tightly wrapped. • A handle that fits com-

fortably in your hand. • Bristles with good bend recovery – they should snap back straight when bent back. • Natural bristles for oil-based paints; synthetic for water-based, latex paints.

TIP from Connie: In those very small tight areas, get a set of artisan brushes at an arts & crafts store. They work great around fireplace mantels and those tiny crevices a regular paint brush can't reach.

“Practice painting without taping, such as the space between the ceiling and wall. A good angle brush and a little practice will give you a smooth line without paint leaking through. I promise!”



Monthly Home Checklist

- Check that gutters are discharging away from your house.
- Check attic for signs of roof leaks.
- Look below windows and doors that flashing is intact.
- Clean dryer vents.
- Be sure your sump pump is working.
- Adjust landscaping blocks that heaved from frost.
- Sow seeds for cool weather vegetables.
- Prune Oaks, Elm and Ash: hold off on Maples and other bleeding trees.

Fix A Drywall Hole

Repair unsightly holes from your walls without the help of your handyman. Start by smoothing the surrounding surface and removing any chunks of drywall. Apply a self-adhesive wall patch over the hole and smooth the mesh onto the wall's surface. Apply a thin, even coat of spackle using a putty knife. Let the spackle fully dry and then sand the area until smooth. Repeat

these two steps until the hole is patched and undetectable. Once the final coat of spackle is dried and smooth, apply any necessary texture and finish up by priming and painting the surface.





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Recipe



FRESH MANGO SALSA

INGREDIENTS

- 3 Med. Tomatoes, chopped remove seeds
- 1 Med. Mango. Peeled & cubed
- 1 Med. Ripe Avocado,

peeled & cubed

- 1 cup frozen corn, thawed
- 1 cup canned black beans, rinsed & drained
- 2-3 Garlic Cloves, minced
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded & minced
- 3 Tbsp. Lime Juice
- 1 Tbsp. EVOO (Extra Virgin Olive Oil)
- 1/8 Tsp Salt

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large bowl, combine all the prepared fruits, vegetables and beans.

In another small bowl whisk together ingredients for the dressing (garlic, jalapeno, lime juice, olive oil & salt).

Pour dressing over the fruits, veges and beans.

Gently fold the dressing into the salad.

Chill for two hours or more.

Serve with tortilla chips, use it to top a taco or as a side with pork or chicken.