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Three tips for first-time home buyers

Real estate has garnered considerable attention since 2020, and for good reason. Though speculators and real estate professionals may point to a number of variables that have affected the market for homes in recent years, the pandemic certainly was among those factors. Real estate prices and mortgage interest rates increased significantly during the pandemic and have remained well above pre-pandemic levels ever since.

The spike in home prices and interest rates has had a significant impact on young home buyers, some of whom feel as though their dream of home ownership may never be realized. And data from the National Association of Realtors indicates the median age of home buyers is now significantly higher than it was two decades ago. In 2023, the median age of buyers was 49, which marked an increase of 10 years compared to the aver-

age buyer age 20 years ago.

First-time home buyers may face a more challenging real estate market than they would have encountered just a half decade ago. The following three tips can help such buyers successfully navigate the market as they look to purchase their first home.

Expect to move quickly. Inventory remains very low, which means buyers are in heated competition for the few homes that are on the market. In late 2023, NAR data indicated the rate of home sales were the lowest they had been in 13 years, so buyers will likely need to move quickly and make an offer if they see a home they like, as chances are the property won't be on the market too long before it's sold. In fact, the NAR noted that homes spent an average of just 23 days on the market in October 2023.

2. Apply for mortgage pre-approval. The competitive nature of the market for buyers means it's in their best interests to arrange financing prior to beginning their home search. A mortgage pre-approval can be a competitive advantage, as it indicates to sellers that buyers won't be denied a mortgage or lack financing after

making an offer. The financial experts at NerdWallet note that buyers will be asked to provide details about their employment, income, debt, and financial accounts when applying for mortgage pre-approval. Gather this information and clear up any issues, such as credit disputes or delinquent accounts, prior to applying for pre-approval.

3. Set a realistic budget and expect to offer over asking price. A financial planner and/or real estate professional can help first-time buyers determine how much they should be spending on a home. In the current market, buyers should know that they will likely need to pay more than asking price for a home. For example, the NAR reports that 28 percent of homes sold for above list price in October 2023. With that in mind, first-time buyers may do well to look for homes that are under budget in anticipation of offering more than list price after seeing a property.

The real estate market remains competitive for buyers. First-time buyers can utilize three strategies to increase their chances of realizing their dream of home ownership.

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Burning Embers is a new celosia bred for its gorgeous bronze foliage with dark pink veins that contrast nicely with the vibrant pink flower plumes.

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Plus, Burning Embers

does very well in both heat and humidity while remaining completely covered with blooms that withstood the test of time.

How to Grow

Seeds should be sown indoors with temperatures between 77 to 86°F. Transplant when plant size is 3-4 inches, usually around 25 days after germination. Flowers appear approximately 15-20 days after transplanting. Deadheading is not recommended. Staking is not required. This annual needs full sun and normal watering.



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Tips to revitalize a garden this spring

Gardening is a rewarding hobby that pays a host of significant dividends. Many people love gardening because it allows them to spend time outdoors, and that simple pleasure is indeed a notable benefit of working in a garden. But the National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture notes that gardening provides a host of additional benefits, including helping people get sufficient levels of exercise, reduce stress and improve mood.

With so much to gain from gardening, it's no wonder people look forward to getting their hands dirty in the garden each spring. As the weather warms up, consider these tips to help bring a garden back to life.

- **Discard the dead weight.** Winter can take its toll on a garden, even in regions where the weather between December and early spring is not especially harsh. Discard dead plants that have lingered into spring and prune any perennials that need it. Branches that fell during winter storms also should be removed at this point if they have not previously been discarded.

- **Test the soil.** Soil testing kits can be purchased at local garden centers and home improvement retailers. Such tests are inexpensive and can reveal if the soil needs to be amended to help plants thrive in the months to come.

- **Mulch garden beds.** Mulching benefits a garden by helping soil retain moisture and preventing the growth of weeds. Various garden experts note that mulching in spring can prevent weed seeds from germinating over the course of spring and summer. That

means plants won't have to fight with weeds for water when the temperature warms up. It also means gardeners won't have to spend time pulling weeds this summer.

- **Inspect your irrigation system.** Homeowners with in-ground irrigation systems or above-ground systems that utilize a drip or soaker function can inspect the systems before plants begin to bloom. Damaged sprinkler heads or torn lines can deprive plants

Revitalize Garden

Continued on Page 5







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Spring cleaning pointers

Spring is a season of renewal. When the flowers are blooming and the trees are budding and the weather is pleasantly warm, people often feel inspired to make changes around their homes. Work may begin with culling belongings and organizing essentials.

There is debate regarding where the practice of “spring cleaning” originated. Some researchers link it to certain religious groups. It has long been an ancient Jewish custom



to thoroughly clean a house in preparation for the spring-time feast of Passover. The house is scoured to remove any yeast bread, or chametz, from

the home. Similarly, members of the Greek Orthodox church celebrate “Clean Week,” which is a week of cleaning before Lent. In Iranian culture, families spend days cleaning prior to the Persian New Year, which begins on the spring equinox.

Spring cleaning also has some secular roots. For instance, in the 1800s, Londoners routinely cleared their homes of grime and soot that accumulated over the winter.

Spring cleaning is still a ritual for many today. As people embark on their plans to tidy up, these tips can help them along.

Spring Cleaning
Continued on Page 6

Revitalize Garden

Continued from Page 4
of water they will need to bloom and ultimately thrive once the weather warms up.

• **Tune up your tools.** Gardening tools have likely been sitting around gathering dust since fall. Serious gardeners know that tools can be expensive, so it pays to protect that investment by maintaining the tools. Sharpened pruners help make plants less vulner-

able to infestation and infection. Well-maintained tools like shovels and hoes also make more demanding gardening jobs a little bit easier, so don't forget to tune up your tools before the weather warms up.

It's almost gardening season, which means gardeners can start on the necessary prep work to ensure their gardens grow in strong and beautiful this spring.

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Spring Cleaning

Continued from Page 5
Tackle one big task a day

Who hasn't started one project only to be distracted into moving along to another room? This often occurs when people discover something out of place in one space and then move that item where it belongs, only to find a new cleaning task at hand in that space. Inefficiency can make you give up on spring cleaning prematurely. Agree to address one room/task a day. Keep a basket or box handy to store

errant items until you move on to the next room.

Stock up on supplies

Prepare all of the cleaning supplies in advance. Put together a tool kit of sorts with the equipment you need, including mops, brooms, rags, cleansers, and the like. Organization can keep you on course.

Harness your strengths and weaknesses

Some people clean because

they are stressed or angry, others do so to avoid other tasks. Keep personality in mind when establishing a cleaning schedule. For example, clean at night if you're a night owl, or wait until you are feeling antsy before embarking on a "calm down cleaning."

Tackle seasonal chores first

Some tasks need to get done to prepare for the spring and summer season. These may include cleaning the grill and sorting through outdoor furniture and decor. Spring cleaning may involve readying the

pool for another year of use, or cleaning out rain gutters to prepare for spring storms. Tackle time-dependent tasks first and then move on to others that are less time-sensitive.

Spread out the work

Some people like to devote full weekends to spring cleaning, but that can be overwhelming for others. Breaking down cleaning tasks into 15- to 30-minute intervals each

day can make the job more tolerable.

Spring cleaning season has arrived, and certain tips can make the job more efficient and manageable.



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Renting vs. buying: Know the pros and cons

People typically have two options when they need a place to live: rent or buy. There are pros and cons to each option, and what is best depends on the person and the situation. Choosing to rent or buy is a decision with many moving parts, says NerdWallet. Although buying a home is often presented as a fulfillment

of the “American Dream,” home ownership is not the right fit for everyone. A careful consideration of owning versus renting can help people decide which option is best for them.

Home ownership

Purchasing a home is a large undertaking that requires a significant financial investment. People often buy a home because they want stability and an asset that maintains value and even appreciates in the long run. There’s also more freedom over the living situation when a person buys, as he or she is not beholden to the rules of the landlord. This affords more freedom to decorate and fewer restrictions regarding noise. Homeowners also may not be privy to rules regarding pets. People may be drawn to buying because they know precisely what they will pay each month in living expenses, provided taxes remain relatively stable. Furthermore, setting down roots can help a person feel like part of a community.

Home ownership has some disadvantages. It’s a large financial investment that requires a potentially sizable down payment up front. Owning comes with an inherent, though not ironclad, lack of flexibility, as a person cannot simply move to a new geographic location on a whim. There’s also responsibility involved in home ownership.



Homeowners are required to pay for all maintenance and handle any additional issues that arise.

Renting
Renting can be a more affordable short-term option

Renting vs. Buying
Continued on Page 10



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The exterior of the Kinsale blends a classic trio of shingles, lap siding, and stone together to create an eye-catching Craftsman-inspired exterior. Tapered columns with stone bases frame the cozy front covered porch where a porch swing or patio set would be a charming addition for those who love to catch up with neighbors as they stroll by.

Stepping through the front door, the entry offers soaring 2-story ceilings creating a grand and welcoming first impression. Directly off the entry, French doors open to the den. This space offers homeowners flexibility depending on their lifestyle or life-stage. The proximity to the front door makes the den an ideal place to set up a home office. Larger families or those who entertain frequently may want to furnish this space as a fourth bedroom or guest room. At the end of the entry, the floor plan offers three choices.

To the right, is the owners' suite whose location on the main floor is a trending and desired floor plan feature. With dual walk-in closets and a private en-suite the owners' suite is a relaxing retreat from the hustle and bustle of the day-to-day.

Straight ahead, the floor plan opens to the vaulted great room. A rich display of windows along the back wall floods the room with natural light. And when the days grow short and dark the fireplace takes over, filling the room with light and warmth. A ceiling transition helps to provide some feeling of separation between the dining room and the living area. A sliding glass door extends the dining room to the covered patio for outdoor living on warm summer days. Between the dining room and the kitchen is an island with eating bar. The well-appointed kitchen offers a corner walk-in pantry along with ample counter space. Great rooms have been a highly sought-after floor

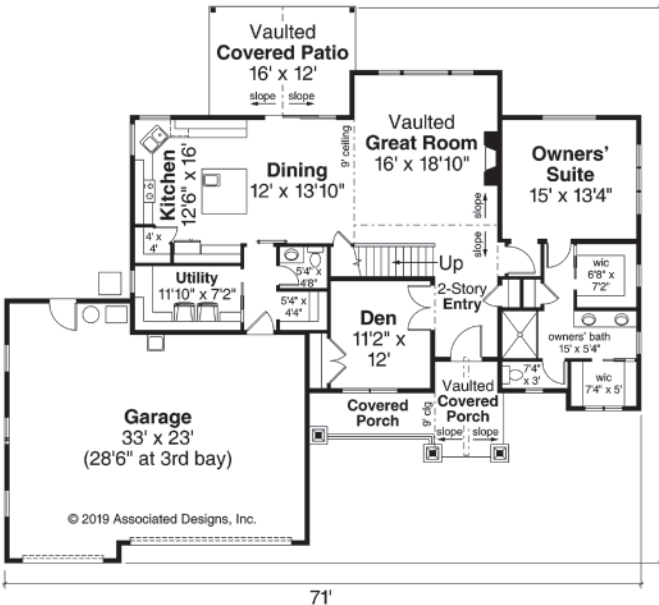
plan feature for years now. Their informal nature allows people and conversations to flow freely and no one feels left out.

Back at the entry hall, turning left will bring you to the stairs that run up to the second floor. On the upper level are two additional bedrooms which share a compartmentalized bathroom that offers dual vanities, a separate shower, and soaking tub. Extended over the garage is a bonus room. For families needing remote work or learning space the bonus room has a cozy corner for a built-in desk. Steps away is a beverage bar for those who might want to furnish the bonus room as a family or game room.

Other floor plan features of note are the main floor laundry room located between

the kitchen and garage. Across from the laundry room is a half bathroom and drop zone for organizing the family electronics, bags, shoes, and coats.

The Kinsale is created by Associated Designs, Inc.'s talented team of residential home designers. To learn more about the Kinsale visit www.AssociatedDesigns.com.



Tips to care for outdoor cats

Pet preferences vary across the world, but dogs and cats are beloved companion animals in many corners of the globe. According to the 2022

Statista Global Consumer Survey, dogs have a good lead over their feline counterparts in the United States, mainland China, the United Kingdom,

and Japan. However, in Germany, cats and dogs are kept by a nearly equal number of pet owners.

Tips to Care

Continued on Page 10

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Tips to Care

Continued from Page 9

Even though cats may not be as popular as dogs, they are widely found in homes. They also may be spending time outside of homes. While there are plenty of feral cats, or those that have grown up outdoors with little to no social interaction with humans, even many domesticated cats spend ample time outdoors.

Most veterinarians feel it is safer to keep cats indoors, where they are not exposed to disease or trauma. However, many cats are simply not happy without fresh air. In such instances, here's how pet

parents can care for cats who need some breathing room.

Leash-train the cat

The American Humane Society suggests leash-training cats that want to be outdoors. Much like having a dog on a leash prevents the pet from running off and getting lost or injured, cats who may be a little too independent for their own good can be curbed with leashes.

Vaccinate and fix the animal

Cats that are exposed to the outdoors are more susceptible to diseases that can be harm-

ful or even fatal. Speak with a vet about which vaccines the cat will require if he or she is going to be spending considerable time outdoors.

Also, while it is recommended for all companion animals to be spayed or neutered, it is especially important for those with access to the outdoors to prevent unwanted mating that can exacerbate overpopulation issues. Plus, animals that are fixed are less likely to roam or fight.

Create a shelter

In addition to providing free access to the home by way of a cat door, outdoor access cats may benefit from a home in the yard. This can protect the cat from weather or other

animals. A pet owner can build a shelter or purchase pre-made varieties that resemble a chicken coop. It's also best to ensure cats have access to fresh water while outside. Regularly inspect the shelter to keep it clean and in good repair.

Consider a "catio"

Some cats will be satisfied with something that lets fresh air in without having to be completely outdoors. A "catio" is an outdoor ledge or enclosure for cats that is covered by grating or mesh, according to Habitat Have. It can be attached to a window or be freestanding in an area of the yard, providing a lounging spot that is outdoors but protected.



Provide identification

Cat caregivers can microchip cats and ensure they are wearing the proper identification. If the cat cannot find its way home, there is a greater chance the animal will be found

if identification is present or a chip has been installed.

Although cats are safest indoors, with some precautions, cats can enjoy the fresh air and sunshine.

Renting vs. Buying

Continued from Page 8

than buying. Renting enables a person to get a residence at a lower monthly expense and with no down payment. Those who rent have more flexibility if they want to change homes frequently. There's much less responsibility required to rent, as landlords will handle repairs and other concerns. Expenses may be less because there's no need to pay property taxes, and some utilities may be covered by the property owner.

There is a sentiment that renters are throwing away money each month because

they are not getting any equity with each monthly rental payment. Rental costs also may not be fixed, as a landlord can increase rent with each lease renewal. Renters also must abide by the rules and regulations of the landlord while renting. This may mean restrictions on parties, noise after a certain time, pets, and more.

There's no clear-cut answer as to which is better, renting or buying. People must identify their own priorities and needs during the decision-making process.

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Small renovations that can make a big impact

Home renovations provide a host of benefits. Such projects can increase resale value and improve on the safety, aesthetics and functionality of a home.

Some homeowners may employ the mantra "go big or go home" when they embark on home improvements, thinking that only the largest ren-

ovations produce noticeable change. But that's not the case. Various smaller renovations can provide a lot of bang for homeowners' bucks as well.

• **Countertops (and hardware):** A complete kitchen overhaul may stretch some homeowners' budgets.

However, changing an older countertop for a new material can provide the facelift a kitchen needs. And while changing the cabinets may be homeowners' ultimate goal, swapping hardware in dated finishes for newer handles and pulls can provide low-cost appeal.

• **Paint:** Painting a space is an inexpensive improvement that adds maximum impact. Paint can transform dark and drab rooms into bright and airy oases. Paint also can be used to create an accent wall or cozy nooks. Homeowners also can showcase their personalities with their choice of paint colors.

• **Lighting:** Homeowners should not underestimate what a change in lighting can do. When rooms or exterior spaces are illuminated, they take on entirely new looks. It's worth it to invest in new lighting, whether it's a dramatic hanging light over the dining room table or task lighting in dim spaces.

• **Weatherproofing:** Improving windows, doors, weatherstrip-

ping, and insulation in a home can offer visual appeal and help homeowners save money. The initial investment may be significant, but those costs will pay off in energy savings. According to One Main Financial, space heating is the largest energy expense the average American homeowner has, accounting for around 45 percent of all energy costs.

• **Mudroom:** Turn an entryway into a more functional

space with the addition of cabinets, benches or custom-designed storage options that perfectly fit the area. Cubbies and cabinets can corral shoes, umbrellas, hats, bags, and much more.

• **Accent updates:** Any space, whether it's inside or outside a home, can get a fresh look with new decorative accents. Invest in new throw pillows and even slipcovers for living room sofas. Use new

tile or paint the brick on a fireplace in a den, then update the mantel with decorative displays. Purchase wall art that can bring different colors into a room. Change the cushions on deck furniture and buy color-coordinated planters.

These subtle changes will not cost as much as full-scale renovations, but they can still help homeowners transform their homes.

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How to prepare landscapes for new plants

New plants can add much to a landscape. Whether they're replacing plants that are no longer thriving or being added to supplement an existing landscape, new plants are an affordable way to give a home's exterior a whole new look.

Much consideration is given to which plants to add to a

landscape. That's understandable, as homeowners want to choose plants that will thrive and won't compromise the health of surrounding plants and trees. Before planting or even choosing plants, it's important to plan for new additions to a landscape. Preparing the landscape can inform homeowners about which plants to purchase and can ensure they thrive after planting.

• **Document sunlight exposure.** Plants have different needs, and one of the biggest differences between species is the amount of sunlight they need to thrive. According to Penn State Extension, plants characterized as "full sun" require six or more hours of sunlight per day, while those considered "partial sun" need between four and six hours of sunlight per day. Plants designed

as "partial shade" need two to four hours of sun per day, while "shade" plants need less than two hours of sunlight a day. Documenting sunlight exposure in advance gives homeowners an idea of which plants should be planted and where they should be planted. Jot down these observations in a journal over several weeks and then choose plants that will thrive in each area.

• **Test the soil.** A soil pH test is a simple and quick way to determine the acidity of soil. Soil pH levels will indicate how likely a plant is to thrive in a given spot. High levels won't necessarily mean an area should be avoided, as some plants thrive in acidic soils. Additional soil tests can determine other characteristics, such as the nutrient levels of soil and the amount of organic matter it contains. Each of these variables can help homeowners make the right choices as they introduce new plants to their properties.

• **Consider local wildlife.** If local wildlife makes its pres-

Prepare Landscapes

Continued on Page 14



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Casual ranch house plan Anacortes is centered around great room

Clean and simple lap siding graces the front of the nearly symmetrical Anacortes ranch-style house plan. Those who enjoy outdoor living will appreciate the two large, vaulted covered spaces on the front and back side of the home.

Inside, double doors open to the vaulted great room where living room, dining room, and kitchen are all part of a seamless room. A fireplace is tucked in the corner and can be enjoyed throughout the living area. Between the kitchen and dining room, a large island with prep sink and eating bar provide some visual separation of the kitchen in addition to boosting the available counter space. Through a cased opening is the step-

in pantry along with a half bathroom, laundry room and access to the attached, side entry two car garage. Back in the great room, sliding glass doors between the kitchen and dining room lead to the back covered patio.

On the opposite side of the central great room are the Anacortes' three bedrooms. The two secondary bedrooms share a full bathroom with dual vanities. If the additional sleeping areas are not needed, these rooms offer homeowners the flexibility to furnish them a home office, exercise studio, hobby space, guest room, or whatever else suits. The owners' suite is at the end of the hallway and boasts a generous sized walk-in closet-

et, private bathroom with twin sinks, and exclusive access to the outdoors.

The Anacortes' casual floor plan can work as a year-round residence or as a vacation home.

The Anacortes is created by Associated Designs, Inc.'s talented team of residential home designers. To learn more about this design visit www.AssociatedDesigns.com.

Anacortes
PLAN 30-936
Living Area 2402 sq. ft.
Garage 606 sq. ft.
Dimensions 86'x64'
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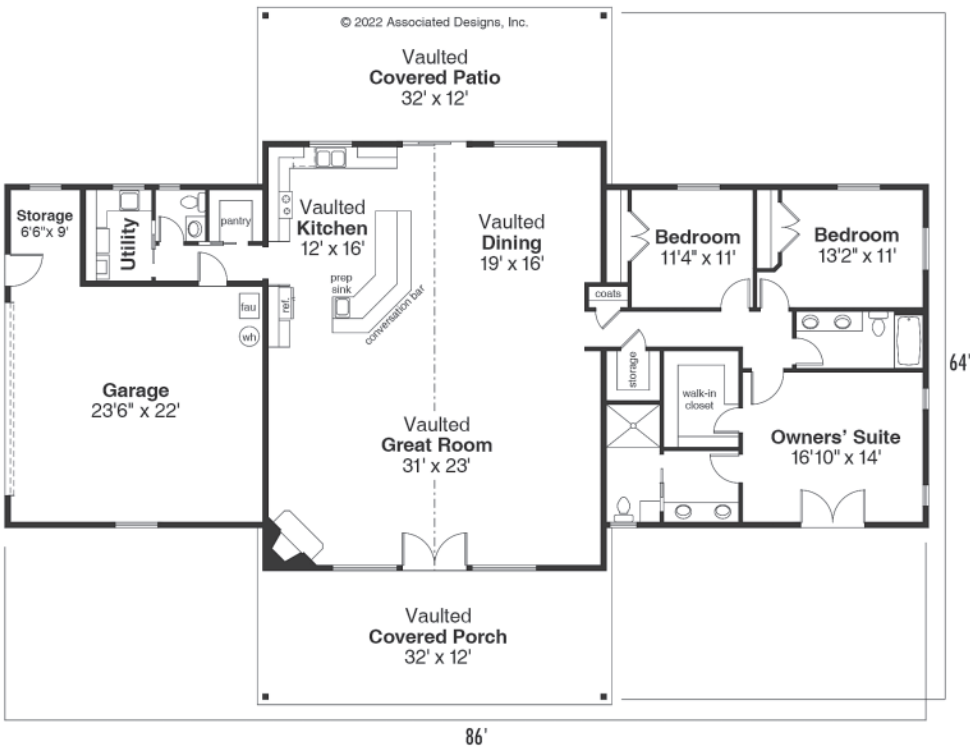
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Minor exterior upgrades that can help sell a home

The home improvement industry has been booming for years, but forecasters are projecting a deceleration in 2023 and perhaps beyond. Estimates from the Home Improvement Research Institute, which is the leading market research resource for the home and building products industry, indicate that growth in the home improvement products market is expected to decelerate from 7.2 percent in 2022 to 1.5 percent in 2023. Inflation continues to affect consumer spending, and homeowners may be looking to spend less on renovations in the year ahead.

Minor upgrades that aren't as costly as larger projects can still make a big difference, especially among pro-

spective buyers. When looking for minor upgrades that can help sell a home, homeowners can rely on Remodeling magazine's annual "Cost vs. Value Report." That report analyzes costs for an assortment of remodeling projects and determines the value of those projects at resale. Though resale value depends on a host of variables, including location, the following are some relatively minor exterior upgrades that impress buyers and provide a strong return for homeowners.

• **Garage door replacement:** Garage doors matter more than sellers may recognize, as various real estate professionals note that buyers appreciate homes with updated garage doors. That's

good news for homeowners, as the "2022 Cost vs. Value Report" indicated homeowners recoup roughly 93 percent of their garage door replacement investment at resale. The average cost of such a job is right around \$4,000, making this a budget-friendly remodeling project.

• **Window replacement:** The cost of new windows will depend on just how many windows must be replaced. But there's no denying buyers like the idea of low emissivity (low-E) windows, which can cut energy bills by a significant amount over time. The Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy estimates that heat gain and heat loss through windows is responsible for between 25 and 30 percent of residential heating and cooling energy use, so sellers who can tell buyers they have new low-E windows can emphasize those savings in



home listings. The "2022 Cost vs. Value Report" indicates that homeowners recoup roughly two-thirds of their investment in new windows at resale.

• **Landscaping:** Well-maintained landscaping is another home exterior component that can make a strong first impression on buyers. A recent survey of nearly 7,000 realtors conducted by the National Association of Realtors found that upgrading a landscape recouped roughly

83 percent of homeowners' initial investment at resale. In addition, 11 percent of realtors surveyed indicated that an upgraded landscape was the decisive factor that closed the

deal for the house. Updating a home's exterior doesn't have to bust homeowners' budgets. Many affordable projects also provide a substantial return at resale.

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Fireworks - at Dusk

SATURDAY EVENTS

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Sturges Park Grand Parade - 6:00 pm, Historic Downtown Buffalo

SUNDAY EVENTS

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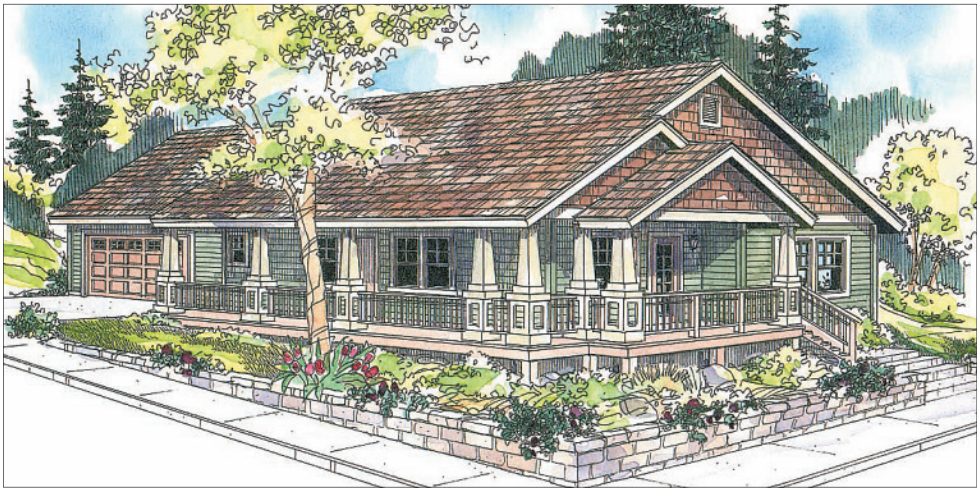
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Karsten has inviting covered porch

A parade of tapered Craftsman columns creates a colonnade effect while highlighting an inviting covered porch that wraps around two sides of the Karsten. It's spacious enough for dining, and great for simply relaxing in the afternoon breezes.

This compact Craftsman-style, single-level plan could be built as a get-away cabin, but it is equally well-suited for use as a year-round residence. Gathering spaces fill the left side; bedrooms (or two bedrooms and a den) are on the

right. Entering, you step into a bright and spacious, vaulted living room. A coat closet is tucked into an alcove just

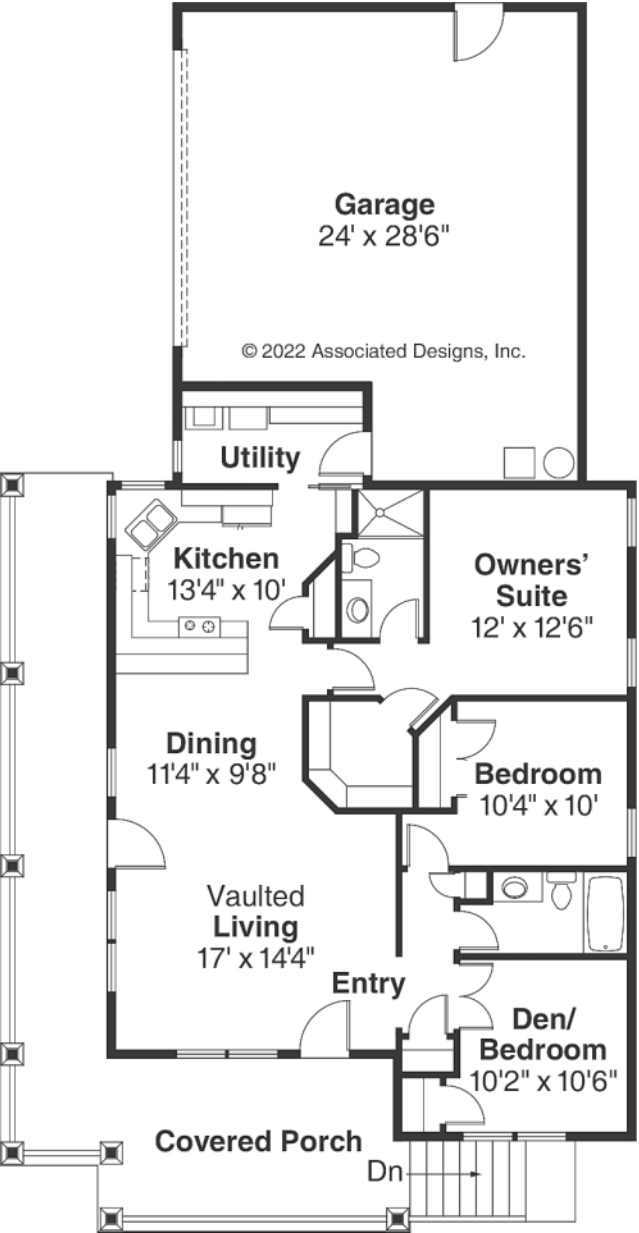
around the corner to the right. Plenty of natural light washes into the living room through wide windows on two sides. The ceiling flattens and drops

Karsten PLAN 30-590

Living Area	1265 sq. ft.
Garage	653 sq. ft.
Dimensions	38'x74'

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to eight feet as the space flows into the dining room and kitchen.

Working at the kitchen sink, you have a view to the rear through windows that fill the back corner. Potted plants can't help but flourish in the bright triangle of space that fronts the sink. Meals and snacks can be served up directly from the cook top to the eating bar with no wasted steps. This counter also doubles as a buffet for the dining area.

A roomy pantry adds to the storage space, and laundry appliances are nearby, in a good-sized utility room that links directly to the garage.

The owners' suite has a private bathroom plus a large walk-in closet with built-in shelves in one corner. Additional shelving rims the walls, extending over the long rods.

Double doors open into the Karsten's front bedroom, or den. This space could also be used as a home office.

Associated Designs is the original source for the Karsten 30-590. For more information or to view other designs, visit www.AssociatedDesigns.com or call 800-634-0123.

Prepare Landscapes—

Continued from Page 12
Once known on a property, homeowners may want to take proactive steps prior to planting anything new. A new fence might prevent animals like deer from getting in, but that likely won't do much to repel smaller animals like squirrels, rabbits or foxes. If wildlife is a concern, homeowners can seek advice at their local garden center about which plants certain animals are likely to ignore. Homeowners who want to attract wildlife can do the same in reverse, choosing plants wildlife will be drawn to. Homeowners who want to deter wildlife should erect fencing or other barriers prior to planting.

• **Clear space if necessary.** Some may thrive but only at the expense of other plants. If necessary, clear space prior to planting to ensure plants have ample space to grow.

Some pre-planting landscape preparation can ensure new plants thrive.



2024 AAS Ornamental Winner

Article & photo by
All-America Selections

**Geranium Big
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The Big EEZE geranium series is known for its supe-

rior container performance, medium vigor, and heat tolerance. The newest addition to the series, Pink Batik, is an AAS National Winner that is sure to impress gardeners with its unique coloration and minimal maintenance require-

ments.

Batiking is known for being a labor-intensive way to produce beautiful colorations on fabric, but this new geranium is a super "EEZE" way to get stunning petal colors on a very floriferous plant with very little effort needed.

Says one judge: "The combined flower output of all our entry plants totaled well over

100 blooms and each one was the same size with an equal amount of pink and white striations." That sounds like multiple-winner qualities!

How to Grow

Great for containers, in full or partial sun. Deadheading is recommended. Blooms late spring to frost.

2024 AAS Edible – Vegetable Winner



Article & photo by
All-America Selections

**Broccoli Purple
Magic F1**

This purple broccoli is magical! How else do you

explain a broccoli that has it all? From its beautiful purple color, tight uniform heads, and bright beads to its great broccoli flavor, this easy to grow broccoli is also stress and heat tolerant. A showstopper.

"Wicked good! Nicest purple broccoli we've ever seen" exclaimed one very experienced edible judge.

Excellent broccoli to try growing in cooler seasons. Can be eaten raw, stir-fried,

roasted, lightly blanched, or steamed for the best texture, either way, you will find it sweeter and more tender than traditional green broccoli.

How to Grow

Start transplants indoors 12 weeks before your first frost date. Keep seeds warm (70 degrees) until they sprout,

then move to a sunny location.

Plant into well-worked soil five weeks before the last spring frost. Water well, plants should not dry out or wilt. Harvest primary head after about 90 days after transplant. Continue to care for the plants to encourage smaller side shoot heads.

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