

SPRING GUIDE

Springtime is fast approaching, and with it comes warmer weather, bluer skies, and longer days—perfect for diversifying your routine and spending more time outside. We created this Spring Guide to help give you, our readers, a few new ideas for getting out into nature and making the most of this season of renewal.

Sources: americastestkitchen.com, bhg.com, growingagreenerworld.com, hgtv.com, pbs.org, thisoldhouse.com, wcny.org.



FEED YOUR GARDEN

After a year of cooking at home, you've probably perfected some delicious recipes, but what do you do with your leftover vegetable stems, eggshells, and coffee grounds? A cold compost is a simple and effective way to not only reduce food waste, but also feed your plants the nutrients necessary to grow and thrive. All you need are your food scraps and a composting container to get started. **Watch the PBS show, *Growing a Greener World*, to find out more.**

Learn more: growingagreenerworld.com

PERK UP YOUR PORCH

Outdoor spaces are at a premium these days, and your porch is the ideal place to enjoy the warmer weather, read a book, watch nature, or say hello to your neighbors. Spruce up your porch this spring with projects big or small to add both pizzazz and functionality to your space. If you're eager to open your toolbox, try your hand at building a comfortable Adirondack chair. Or, to liven-up your current motif, try adding a pop of color with planters or brightly hued seat cushions. **Watch *This Old House* Thursdays at 8 p.m. on WCNY-TV for more on these ideas and others.**

Learn more: thisoldhouse.com



DECLUTTER YOUR WORKSPACE

Whether you have a dedicated home office or have repurposed another part of your home as your personal or professional command center, a cluttered work area can be stressful. This year, focus some of your spring-cleaning energy on organizing your work-from-home space, ensuring you'll maximize productivity while decreasing anxiety. Two great ways to get started: Label file folders to organize existing papers and mail, or create 'life binders' for important medical, auto, and pet paperwork. **Find more home office inspiration on *This Old House*.**

Learn more: thisoldhouse.com

HIT THE TRAILS

We all need to get out of the house and into the fresh air, and now is the ideal time to mix up your neighborhood route by exploring some of Central New York's outdoor parks. A few to consider: Whetstone Gulf State Park in Lowville houses trails, a three-mile gorge, a swimming area, picnic space, and more than 50 campsites. Bird watching enthusiasts can spot woodpeckers and great blue herons on the easy walking loop at Esker Brook Nature Trail in Seneca Falls. Finally, bring your pooch along at Great Bear Recreational Trails in Fulton, home to eight, dog-friendly walking and biking trails. With waterfalls, lakes, and scenery to spare, Central New York has a park for you! **Learn more:** wcny.org/connectmagazine



MAKE YOUR GRASS A LITTLE GREENER

Keeping your lawn green and healthy requires different tasks from season to season—and spring most of all. Now is the best time to use a slow-release fertilizer on your lawn to keep your grass lush and verdant through the summer and into the fall. Additionally, aerating your lawn (poking two-to-three-inch deep holes evenly across its expanse) before April showers hit will ensure your grass receives the airflow and hydration it needs.

Learn more: thisoldhouse.com or gardensmart.tv



GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY (TOGETHER!)

Gardening is a great way to get outside and be active—all while beautifying your surroundings—and kids of all ages can get involved. Even if you don't have a formal garden, a couple of containers in a sunny, outdoor spot offer the perfect opportunity to teach your child what plants need to grow, count seeds together, or keep a photo journal of your seedlings' progress. Together, you can bond over your efforts for weeks to come. **Learn more:** pbs.org/parents

KEEP YOUR BODY MOVING

Spending more time at home? A bit of light movement every day has numerous health benefits and can help to reduce stress, alleviate aches and pains, and strengthen bones. *Sit and Be Fit* and *Classical Stretch* incorporate full-body movements designed to increase mobility and protect joint health. Plus, as the warmer months arrive, you can take your exercise routine outdoors to boost your morale and your energy level. **Watch on WCNY-TV daily at 6 a.m.**



WELCOME ALL COOKS IN THE KITCHEN

When the kids need a break from screen time, getting them involved with cooking can be both fun and educational. The PBS website, pbs.org/parents, is full of resources and dozens of recipes designed to help your children get busy in the kitchen; from creative, healthy snacks (think: veggie "snails" and apple chips) to colorful, science-gearred desserts that everyone will enjoy. Share your favorite family recipes or find something new to try together. An added bonus: Time in the kitchen teaches kids to make healthy choices and can encourage them to eat more adventurously! **Learn more:** pbs.org/parents

CLEAN CLEANER

WCNY's LEED Platinum certification always inspires us to think greener, and eco-friendly spring-cleaning supplies are a great place to start. This season, wipe down your surfaces with biodegradable products from BlueLand, a company that has eliminated 100 billion, single-use plastic bottles from shelves thanks to its reusable packaging. For a more affordable and easy-to-find option complete with natural ingredients, Mrs. Meyer's offers dozens of lovely scents in recycled packaging. **Learn more:** blueland.com; mrsmeyers.com



UPGRADE YOUR RECIPE BOX

If you're tired of your regular weekly meal rotation, it might be time to try out some new recipes and upgrade your kitchen equipment. From ranking the best nonstick skillet to the latest culinary gadgets or a well-vetted schnitzel recipe, *America's Test Kitchen* has all the tools you need to create dishes your family is sure to love. **Watch the show Saturdays at 1 p.m. on WCNY-TV.** **Learn more at:** americastestkitchen.com

USE AN APP FOR THAT

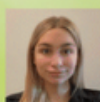
We all strive to be more productive and use our time more efficiently, and a selection of free apps on your smartphone or tablet can help you manage it all seamlessly. The ultimate task-management tool, Todoist, contains features for day planning and scheduling, reminders, and tools for project organization. For a simpler but equally intuitive app, Minimalist offers to-do list features and a clean interface that is easy to navigate. Finally, Cozi Family Organizer is just the thing for busy households, helping to coordinate schedules, track appointments, and create and share shopping lists and chore duties.



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