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Brought to you by:



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## Tips

### Home Technology Predictions

Many years ago one of my science teachers predicted that television sets "would be like pictures that you can hang on the wall". Amazingly, that prediction has come true with televisions that enhance our lives by taking up less space while providing larger screens with sharper images. Read about currently available innovative technologies and products that are both hi-tech and low impact to the environment in an article written by Mairi Mackay for CNN [here](#).

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### It's Not the Heat, It's the Humidity!

If you live in a winter climate, step outside, breathe deeply, and feel that cold winter air—how invigorating! That winter air brings not only cold, but also a guarantee of something else—dry air. And while dry air isn't a bad thing in the great out-of-doors, it can be difficult to live with inside your home. Purchasing a humidifier keeps the air in your home from getting too dry during those frosty months of the year. When you begin to research humidifier options you will find that two types exist: portable ones and permanent ones. Both types of units work effectively, but are designed to solve different problems. See the complete American Homeowners Association article on humidifiers by [reading more here](#).

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### Indoor Fireplace Safety

Many of us (more than 33 million) have fireplaces in our homes, even in temperate climes, for warmth and atmosphere. In fact, according to the U.S. Fire Administration "More than one-third of Americans use fireplaces, wood stoves and other fuel-fired appliances as primary heat sources in their homes.



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We consider referrals from our friends,  
clients and associates to be the greatest  
compliment that we could receive.  
Thank you for keeping our company in  
mind whenever a referral presents itself.

Unfortunately, many people are unaware of the fire risks when heating with wood and solid fuels. Heating fires account for 36% of residential home fires in rural areas every year. Often these fires are due to creosote buildup in chimneys and stovepipes. All home heating systems require regular maintenance to function safely and efficiently." [Read this article](#) about indoor fireplace installation and safety.

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### Kitchen Odors

One of our clients has a log-sided home with a metal roof and no kitchen exhaust vent fan. Because of the way the home is constructed, it is simply not practical or feasible to retrofit an exhaust vent. This means, of course, that kitchen odors inevitably accumulate. He asked us for some suggestions to help reduce the cooking odors. Here are a [few ideas](#) from experts.

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### Stain Removal

OK. The holidays are over! For a lot of us it was wonderful to have so many family and friends visiting to share them, but sometimes they've left something behind—stains in and on various items that matter to you. A good treatment for muddy stains on carpet is club soda. Remove as much of the mud as you can with a clean, dry cloth. Then pour a little club soda on the cloth and BLOT (don't rub— this could spread or grind in the mud) to remove the remaining stain. We've assembled some more hints for removing red wine, chocolate, cranberry, wax and other [stains here](#).

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## NEWS

In a December 27 article CNNMoney.com's Walter Updegrave addresses timing the housing market. You have good credit and plan to put 20 percent down on a house in the \$250,000 to \$400,000 range. You want to buy but are scared to take the plunge in a crumbling market. Mr. Updegrave answers a question about this and suggests how to think it through in an [article found here](#).

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## Fast Facts

New Year's Day celebrations date from around 4000 years ago when the ancient Babylonians (modern Iraqis) celebrated Samhain for 11 days in the early spring.

In North America the Auld Lang Syne is often sung right after the stroke of midnight. The literal translation from Scottish is "old long ago."

The English name for the first month is from the Roman god Janus, the god of beginnings and the gatekeeper of doors and entrances.

The Rose Bowl Parade is the most watched New Year's Day parade in North America. Initially football was not so well received, so chariot races were run at the Rose Bowl Stadium from 1903 - 1915.

Roman Emperor Julius Caesar officially established January 1st as the first day of the new year of the European calendar. The day was kept in the 16th century adoption and conversion to the Gregorian calendar, the most widely used calendar in the world.

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