



A Room with a View.

DECEMBER 2023



NOTES & NEWS

Sparkly Snow Globes

There's something magical about shaking a snow globe and peering at the miniature scene inside as the glittery specks—known as “flitter”—fall to the bottom. These charming collectibles have been around since the late 1800s and are popular gift shop souvenirs as well as holiday décor. To prevent the water from clouding or leaking over time, store snow globes out of direct sunlight.

Rise to the Occasion

Running out of storage space? Bed risers may be the solution for you. Often inexpensive and easy to install, these support pieces lift beds, allowing you to slide bins and boxes underneath. Some styles of bed risers work under other furniture, too, such as sofas and end tables. For bulky pieces, look for heavy-duty risers that are designed to support a lot of weight.

Find Your Happy Place

“Home isn't a place, it's a feeling.”
—Cecelia Ahern

HIGHLIGHTS

Color of the Year: Viva Magenta

The color of 2023, according to the Pantone Color Institute, was Viva Magenta. This lively red hue is certainly a sight to see, but we'll leave the choice up to you: Was 2023 Viva Magenta? If not, what color would you choose to describe the year?

Write a Letter

Celebrate National Letter Writing Day on Dec. 7. It's the perfect time of year to reach out to loved ones, and getting a handwritten letter in the mail is always a welcome surprise.

Stay Healthy With Hydration

We're always told that drinking plenty of fluids helps us recover from an illness. But staying hydrated also aids in avoiding sickness in the first place! Drinking water helps keep your nasal passages moist and working properly to fight viruses that enter your body.

New Life From Old Books

Around 320 million books end up in landfills every year, but you can reduce this number in a variety of ways. Books in good condition that aren't outdated (like old textbooks) are welcome donations at thrift stores and Little Free Libraries. Paperback and hardcover books with the cover removed can be tossed in a recycling bin that accepts paper. And there are tons of arts and crafts projects that you can do with old books and their pages.

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TRIVIA WHIZ



Polar Opposites

Brrr! Bundle up with multiple layers of clothing, your warmest coat, a fuzzy hat and thick mittens to take an imaginary trip to the ends of the Earth: the North and South Poles!

- At both poles, it takes the sun three months to reach a high point in the sky and another three months to reach the horizon again—meaning there are six months of daylight and six months of night.
- The North Pole is a sheet of ice floating in the middle of the Arctic Ocean, but the South Pole is located on land on the continent of Antarctica.
- The South Pole is much colder, having never reached temperatures above zero. Mountains on the land cause higher and chillier elevations.
- The same year that man first walked on the moon was also the first year man walked to the North Pole—1969!
- At the South Pole, it rains diamonds! No, not literally, but an icy fog that coats the air has been aptly nicknamed “diamond dust.”
- Monitoring wind speeds over the North Pole helps meteorologists make their weekly forecast.
- Don’t get lost, wandering traveler; if you’re ever visiting the South Pole, know that every direction is north.
- You won’t spot polar bears and penguins in the same wintry scene. Along with walrus and arctic foxes, polar bears can be found at the North Pole and surrounding Arctic areas. Animals at home in Antarctica include emperor penguins, leopard seals and orcas.

Tidying Up When You’re Short on Time

When we’re busy, household chores and organizing can fall to the bottom of our to-do lists. But creating and maintaining a tidy home amidst the hustle and bustle of a hectic schedule is possible!

A few 15-minute cleanups here and there can go a long way. For example, get up a bit earlier than usual or go to bed a bit later, and you can complete small tasks like folding a load of laundry or clearing off a cluttered countertop.

Break chores and projects up into manageable tasks so that they don’t become too overwhelming. Focus on one shelf at a time, or reorganize a different drawer on each day of the week; by the end, you’ll have a completely organized dresser or desk!

As you tidy up your home, bins and boxes can be a big help. Dedicate specific containers for things to put

away, throw away, donate or sell. Place items in the boxes as you go; then, you can deal with the contents later. But don’t let the box sit too long, or it may become new clutter.

Do your best to stop excess stuff from coming into your home. Use what you have before buying something new. Consider adopting a “one in, one out” rule for various categories.

Finally, remember that nobody’s home is perfectly tidy all the time! Take breaks to relax, breathe and get proper rest.



Picture-Perfect Photos

Snap a pic! With a few simple tips, almost anyone can master the art of photography. Whip out your smartphone or camera and “say cheese” with this guide to better photo-taking.

When composing a shot, many photographers follow the rule of thirds. Break the photo area into thirds, horizontally and vertically, to make nine total sections. Many smartphone cameras have the option of adding grid lines, making it easier to frame your subject on one of the lines. The result is a more balanced and engaging image.

Don’t be afraid of angles! They can add depth, height or silliness to shots. Shooting from above adds a slimming effect; eye-level photographs create connection with the subject; and low angles make the subject appear larger and dramatic.

The default flash setting on many cameras can cause overexposure, which washes out the subject in an unflattering way. Flash actually works better during daylight hours! For night photography, try to find a natural light source. You can even use a flashlight in a pinch.

Take advantage of editing tools. Sharpen to enhance details; increase the exposure to lighten shadows; or adjust the contrast and saturation for vibrancy. As long as you have an original copy of the photo saved, you can play around with these tools as much as you want until you get the desired effect.



WIT & WISDOM



VR in Real Life

Slipping on a virtual reality headset allows the user to enter into a virtual world, where they are able to interact with artificial objects seen on the screen. These innovative headsets have many uses, from fun to functional!

Entertainment. Many people's first encounter with a VR headset is using it to play a video game. The immersive experience allows players to feel like they are really in the game, making gaming headsets some of the hottest gadgets on holiday gift lists. Other entertaining ways to use a VR headset include watching movies, television or sports; visiting a landmark or museum; riding roller coasters; and meeting new friends.

Education. Engineers and designers can use VR to experiment before making pricey prototypes. As a result, various industries—such as automotive, retail, architecture and interior design—have adopted VR as a valuable tool. By creating lifelike simulations, VR also aids in job training for roles like surgeons, law enforcement officers, or space and military personnel.

Business. Although many offices use video conferencing software to keep in touch with their at-home workers, some innovative companies are having VR meetings instead, allowing for stronger collaboration. VR has also been used for recruitment, marketing and team building.

Brown Butter Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cups dark brown sugar
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped pecans, toasted
- 1 1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chips

Directions:

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt butter and cook until it foams and turns golden brown. Transfer butter to a heat-safe bowl and refrigerate until solid, about 45 minutes.

In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Set aside.

Transfer solidified butter to a large bowl. Add brown sugar. Use an electric mixer to beat for 2 to 3 minutes on medium speed until contents are light and fluffy. Add eggs and vanilla; mix well. Reduce speed and add dry ingredients; mix until combined. Add pecans and chocolate chips and mix on low until incorporated.

Preheat oven to 350° F. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

Portion dough into balls and place on baking sheets, about 3 inches apart. Bake for 13 to 15 minutes or until golden brown.

Find more recipes at
CHSugar.com.



“When you hear the bell, you feel a tug at your heart.”

—**Vera Nazarian**

“Life’s not always going to be bells and whistles ... the only thing you can control is your attitude.”

—**Gary Woodland**

“A bell is no bell till you ring it,
A song is no song till you sing it,
And love in your heart
wasn’t put there to stay,
Love isn’t love till you give it away!”

—**Oscar Hammerstein II**

“Bells are music’s laughter.”

—**Thomas Hood**

“True love comes quietly, without banners or flashing lights. If you hear bells, get your ears checked.”

—**Erich Segal**

“Those evening bells!
Those evening bells!
How many a tale their music tells ...”

—**Thomas Moore**

“Don’t bother to ring a bell in the ear that doesn’t listen.”

—**Michael Bassey Johnson**

“The game is not lost—or won—until the last bell goes.”

—**John Curtin**

“There were no violins or warning bells ... no sense that my little life was about to change. But we never know, do we? Life turns on a dime.”


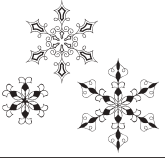
—**Stephen King**

“Ring in the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.”

—**Alfred Lord Tennyson**



December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>December</h1>					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	Christmas 25	26	27	28	29	30

“This Month In History”

DECEMBER

1913: Making production easier, the first moving assembly line is unveiled! With the invention, Henry Ford shaved off more than 12 hours of work from the time spent building just one vehicle.

1941: Civil Air Patrol, a nonprofit civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is established. With duties that include rescue missions and disaster relief, the organization is credited with saving 100 lives per year.

1954: Fast-food chain Burger King is first opened in Miami, Fla. The restaurant’s signature sandwich, the flame-broiled

Whopper hamburger, is able to be customized in 200,000 unique variations. Have it your way!

1964: The first TV special of “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” airs on NBC. The classic character, “the most famous reindeer of all,” shines bright during the holiday season.

1973: The Endangered Species Act is made official, establishing protection for fish, wildlife and plants that are threatened or endangered. Environmental efforts based on the legislation have led to the recovery of species such as the bald eagle and gray wolf.

1998: The first mission for assembly of the International Space Station is launched on orbiter Endeavour. This connected the Russian and American station modules using the “Unity” segment.

2012: The music video for “Gangnam Style,” by Korean rapper Psy, becomes the first YouTube video to hit 1 billion views.