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March Into Spring Gardening

New Home? Re-key the Locks

Did You Know?

March Into Spring Gardening

Spring is a great time to start planning and planting your garden, so let's dig in!

Growing from Seed

For annual flowers to grow from seed, consider cosmos, cornflower, marigolds, sweat peas, poppies, snapdragons, and sunflowers. Some of these, such as cosmos and poppies, will self-sow—meaning you don't need to plant them every year. Others, including sweet peas, sunflowers, and marigolds, have seeds you can collect and save for next year.

The best veggies to grow from seed are beets, radishes, and carrots; cucumbers; greens such as lettuce, spinach, collards, and Swiss chard; and squash of all varieties, including everything from acorn squash to zucchini.

Growing from Seedlings and Bulbs

If you only want to plant a few of one type of vegetable, visit your local nursery, where you can buy a variety of young plants. Planting from seedlings or starts can also help you get a jump on the growing season, especially for veggies such as tomatoes, peppers, and melons that need time to mature.

Herbs

If you have a sunny area and decent soil, most herbs are easy to grow. If not, plant your herbs in containers and position them so they catch the most sun possible. Try parsley, basil, oregano, thyme, dill, sage, or rosemary. Love mint? It tends to take over planting beds, so plant it in a container.



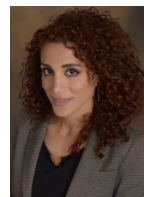
Growing Trees and Shrubs

Late winter to early spring is a great time to plant trees and shrubs. In general, plant deciduous trees and shrubs when they are dormant (have no leaves). For trees and shrubs that stay green all year (evergreens), plant them before new growth starts.



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New Home? Re-key the Locks

Why re-key locks when you buy a new home? The biggest reason is home security. The previous homeowners may have given keys to neighbors, the dog walker, the house cleaner, family members... who knows? That's the point: You don't know who has a copy of your house key.

Re-keying vs. Changing Locks

There's a difference between re-keying locks and changing them. Re-keying involves changing the key pins inside the locking mechanism so that a new key operates the lock. Changing the locks is more complicated—each door lock's hardware needs to be removed and the components need to be replaced with new hardware.

While most homeowners opt to re-key the locks, there are some reasons why you might want to change yours:

- If your home is older and the locking technology is dated
- If the locks are showing signs of wear and tear
- If you have different brands of door locks with multiple keys

If your locks don't fall into the above categories, re-keying is just as secure as changing them.



Ready to Re-key?

You have several options: Do it yourself by purchasing a rekeying kit, or call in a local locksmith. If you take the DIY route, do some research on the type of re-keying kit you need—these kits are tied to the brand of lock you have.

A Smart Alternative

Prefer not to keep track of so many keys? Install a smart lock. These locks offer a key-free alternative, and let you monitor and remotely lock or unlock your doors from your smartphone.



Did You Know?

First American home warranty plans include Re-key Service for buyers, making it easy to have your locks re-keyed by a professional locksmith.



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