

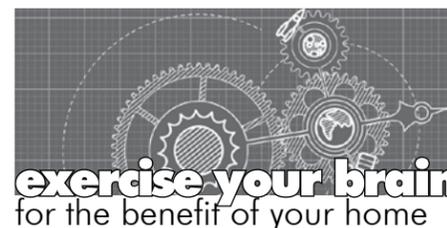


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September/October 2010



As Alaskans, fall is our time to get prepared for the oncoming winter. This means many things... changing your tires, preparing and winterizing the house, etc. One important thing we should focus our attention on for the winter ahead is to stimulate our brains to keep it healthy, happy and sharp. Don't spend your winter on the couch watching TV; instead use your fall to keep your productivity up during downtime. If you have a home project in mind, use the winter to formulate a plan, get quotes and be ready to execute in spring. Walk the exterior of your home before snow falls. Ask yourself if you want to make any changes, add an addition or create an outdoor living space. Maybe you are happy with the exterior and you want to focus your energy on interior renovations during the cold months.

Browse book stores and buy some magazines on landscaping, décor, deck building or whatever your

focus may be. Make a list of things you want to accomplish this season. Spend time by the fireplace going over ideas and determine which ones are "must haves" and which ones you should delete.

You can't turn on creativity like a car, but you can't always sit around and wait for inspiration to strike either. You have to cultivate creativity on an ongoing basis. Whether you want to focus your attention on a home improvement project, career or family matters use the tips below to exercise your brain for inspiration.

**Keep a journal.** Record ideas as soon as they come to you by keeping a notebook close at hand at all times. If you don't jot it down, you might forget it entirely and not be able to recall your genius idea when you need it. A real notebook, not a digital one is best, allowing you to make sketches and drawings, but anything that lets you capture your thoughts will work. Print pages or tear out sheets of magazines, add them to your journal or create an idea binder. When you need to charge up your creativity, search your notebook or binder for ideas and examples.

**Relax your mind.** Give your subconscious a chance to work by turning off your brain from time to time. Don't focus on work or solving problems

constantly. Take time to exercise and relax, and give yourself permission to think about other things. A tired mind won't generate fresh ideas.

**Turn problems around.** Switch gears by looking for the opposite of what you want. Exploring how you could make a bad situation worse can sometimes tell you what not to do. Looking for a bad idea might lead you to a good one.

**Combine random elements.** Try this exercise: Look at two items on your desk right now and figure out a way to put them together. A clock radio and a coffee mug, for instance, could be turned into a coffee mug with a clock on it. This won't necessarily generate any useful idea, but it will train your mind to see different possibilities.

**Recruit a partner.** With another person involved, you're not limited to your own experience and perspective. Bounce ideas off another person, someone you're comfortable with, but someone who will challenge you when necessary.

**Utilize the fall as much as possible,** even consider doing some preliminary work before the snow arrives, allowing you to dive right in when our days get a little longer and your inspirations have enjoyed a winter of fine-tuning. □

## FEATURED Properties



Downtown  
\$129,000

Great downtown corner unit w/lots of windows and fabulous views to the north & east & city lights! Laminate wd flrs, remodeled bath, white appliances, very open and spacious. Storage on the first floor. Assigned parking space in parking lot behind building. Great location near Park Strip, shops, entertainment and central business district.

MLS: 10-10349



Lovely Ranch  
\$234,900

3 BR, 1 BA, 2 Car Gar. Lovely Ranch home in S Anchorage on large lot and cul de sac. Newer carpet, hot water heater, stove, gutters, both flooring and baseboard trim, shows really nice w/ huge fenced yard and raised garden beds. Schools are Trailside, Hanshew and Service

MLS: 10-9919



Quality Construction  
\$413,000

Gorgeous home w/convenient flr plan. Quality construction and efficiently designed. Main lvl has beautiful maple flring, lg bay windows, designer colors/style. Great open kitchen for entertaining w/42" cabinets, SS appl, solid surface counters. All bdrms, Indry up. S exsps for yr round light! Covered front porch, big back deck, fenced yard, lot size almost 1/4 acre!

MLS: 10-676

## projects

**That Boost Your Home's Value When you Sell**



If you are considering selling your home, these improvement projects will increase its value.

1. Replacing windows with vinyl or wood ones returns 77% to 72% of the money spent.
2. Full bathroom or kitchen remodel brings back about 62% of it's cost
3. Adding a deck returns 81% of the cost if the deck is made of wood,

or 61% if it is constructed of more expensive composite materials.

4. Remodeling and finishing a previously unfinished basement can return 75% of the cost of the project. □

### Your STANDARDS

Letting your customers set your standards is a dangerous game, because the race to the bottom is pretty easy to win. Setting your own standards - and living up to them - is a better way to profit. Not to mention a better way to make your day worth all the effort you put into it.  
- Seth Godin



One in five smoke alarms don't work! The problem is almost always user error. Failure to replace dead batteries, turning off the alarm while cooking and forgetting to turn it back on, etc. October 3-9 is Fire Prevention Week. Remember to place alarms outside bedrooms and on every living level, including basements, away from bathroom and kitchens—areas where false alarms are most likely. Test alarms monthly and change batteries yearly.



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*Great Advice*  
FOR ALL MANAGERS

It's said that when former Atomic Energy Commission Chairman, Gordon Dean, died in a plane crash in 1958, an envelope was found among his personal effects. On the back of the envelope, Dean had scribbled nine lessons that he had learned in life. Every manager would be wise to take note of each one:

1. Never lose your capacity for enthusiasm.
2. Never lose your capacity for indignation.
3. Never judge people – don't type them too quickly. But in a pinch never first assume that a man is bad; first assume a man is good and that, at worst, he is in the gray area between bad and good.
4. Never be impressed by wealth alone or thrown by poverty.
5. If you can't be generous when it's hard to be, you won't be when it's easy.
6. The greatest builder of confidence is the ability to do something – almost anything – well.
7. When confidence comes, then strive for humility; you aren't as good as all that.
8. The way to become truly useful is to seek the best that other brains have to offer. Use them to supplement your own, and be prepared to give credit to them when they have helped.
9. The greatest tragedies in world and personal events stem from misunderstandings. So communicate!

## FEATURED *Properties*



*Amazing Views*  
\$563,000

Inlet & mountain views surround this home! You will love lounging on one of the many Trex decks that wrap this home. The great room has windows to both the mountains and the inlet. Chef's kitchen w/ floor to ceiling cabinetry custom built for this home. The master suite located on top floor w/ private bath fully remodeled w/granite, tile, soaking tub & separate tiled multi-head shower.

MLS:10-8712



*Lake Front*  
\$895,000

Stunning Views were part of this Custom Architecturally Designed Lake Front House! A Wall of Windows overlooking the water and mountains. This is a Home where you will Love to Live, Entertain, and Raise your Family. Recreation room, high ceilings, float plane access, two great decks, and a feeling of Privacy!

MLS: 10-7223



*Elegant*  
\$1,100,000

Incredible "Alaskan" custom home. Spectacular views all the way down Turnagain Arm, across the inlet to the mountains & over the city lights. Elegantly constructed with Cedar Log pillars wrapped w/river rock. Spacious kitchen w/granite counter tops commercial grade appliances & views. Huge master suite w/ private bath. Walk out lower level offers game room, bedroom, wine room & exercise room.

MLS: 10-11447

**CREATIVE** *travel ideas*

Fall is often a popular travel time to those who call Alaska home. The sun is starting to hide and the snow hasn't fallen yet, leaving active Alaskans the time for escape. Get enlightened for a future trip with these creative and easy travel items.

**Item: Address Labels**  
**Old Use:** Telling the post office where to return a letter.  
**Travel Idea:** Tagging precious travel items, such as your iPod and digital camera. If you accidentally leave a device on the airplane, a Good Samaritan will know where to mail it.

**Item: Book Covers**  
**Old Use:** Protecting your biology textbook.  
**Travel Idea:** Letting you blend in with the locals. A travel guide screams "I'm lost!" but cloaking it in pretty paper or the jacket of a book in the native language will give you a much lower profile.

**Item: Shower Cap**  
**Old Use:** Protecting your hair when you would rather not lather, rinse, and repeat.  
**Travel Idea:** Preventing dirty or sand-covered shoes from mingling with (and soiling) neatly packed clothes.

**Item: Coasters**  
**Old Use:** Preventing pesky water rings on wood.  
**Travel Idea:** Tagging gifts for the people at home. Hang on to cardboard coasters from the bars and the restaurants you visit on your journey. When you return home with souvenirs for friends and family, punch a hole near the edge of the coaster, tie a ribbon through the hole, and write a quick note in an empty space (or on the blank side).

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