

From Lame Lawn to Lush Garden + Small House, Big Style

NEWPORT *home*

2019

MAGAZINE

Coastal *Comfort*

GET IT SHARE IT



NewportLifeMagazine.com
@NewportLifeMagazine

\$4.95

0 5 >



Decorating
Do's & Don'ts

Entertaining
Made Easy

Fab Finds
from Local Shops

23

Lifestyle

Melissa Breen, Managing Partner,
2Hands Studio

“Being environmentally friendly is not about buying things to be environmentally friendly,” says Melissa Breen. “Living green is about wanting less, using less and wasting nothing.”

❖ Instead of plastic food-storage bags and paper napkins, choose brown paper, cloth napkins and food wraps made with beeswax. Use glass and metal containers for storing and freezing foods to reduce nonbiodegradable waste.

❖ Compost! A paper bag in a bowl on your counter can catch fruit and veggie trimmings, eggshells, tea bags and coffee grinds. The whole bag can go in the compost heap! Or purchase an Earth Machine Compost through the City of Newport during a bulk waste cleanup day at First Beach. If you can't keep scraps in your yard, Aquidneck Community Table accepts scraps at the weekly farmers markets.

❖ Purchase linens and home goods with 100 percent natural fibers such as cotton, linen, wool and hemp, which are biodegradable.

A 100-percent-wool rug is virtually indestructible, and can be shampooed like human hair – no harsh chemicals needed. The lanolin in the wool helps repel dust mites, and wool is inherently flame resistant, eliminating the need for chemical flame retardants.

❖ Use nature. Houseplants naturally purify the air. Open the blinds and let the daylight in! Crack a window now and again – yes, even in the cold months.

Houseplants naturally purify the air.

❖ Reduce energy use. Seal up drafts. Unplug the device that doesn't need to remain charging. Use a sensor to keep your lights on when you need them, and off when you don't.

Melissa Breen's 2Hands Studio provides homeowners with interior renovations and new home designs, and has contributed to such international hospitality design projects as Newport's Stoneacre Brasserie and Queen Anne's Loft.

Simple Steps

to make your home eco-friendly

- ❖ Save water by washing only full loads of clothing and dishes.
- ❖ Install “smart” surge protectors, which disable power when items aren't being used. This is a good option for computers, microwaves and chargers.
- ❖ Have a stack of cloth dish towels that are easy to access when washing hands or cleaning up spills in lieu of paper towels.
- ❖ Thermal shades on your windows will block the sun's heat in the summer and keep the warmth inside during winter. Your energy bill will thank you.
- ❖ When furnishing your home, opt for consignment and antiques stores. Online options that you can use locally are Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace.

Landscape

Philip Dyer, Landscape Designer, Dyer Design

“Use local materials to reduce the carbon footprint of transportation, and plant selections that minimize water use and adhere to the principles of working with nature, not against it,” Philip Dyer says.

❖ Plant a “rain garden,” which is a garden typically filled with native plants that's designed to control runoff, which can cause washouts and carry chemicals into the surrounding environment. “Choose perennial plants or shrubs that will tolerate occasional wet roots. For sunny areas, use joe-pye weed, bee balm, limelight hydrangea and large ornamental grasses such as Miscanthus. In shaded areas, plant astilbe, rhododendron and winterberry.”

❖ Improve the quality of your soil through aeration and composting. Plants grow better, disease is reduced and water permeates into the ground instead of running off.

❖ Consider less lawn and more beds planted with perennials and shrubs, which require fewer chemical applications. Indigenous plants will do well and thrive easily.

❖ Apply organic compost instead of commercial fertilizer. It breaks down slowly, and there is less chance of overfertilizing. Or consider making your own from yard waste and kitchen scraps.

❖ Buy locally produced materials and plants to reduce your carbon footprint.

Trained in Australia, Philip Dyer moved to Rhode Island in 2008 and is the recipient of a 2015 Doris Duke Historic Preservation Award, recognizing his work on an 1853 Victorian Gothic barn in Newport.