

HOW TO FRESHEN UP YOUR HOME FOR THE NEW YEAR.

As the new year fast approaches, many of us are at home for a break over the holidays. With this extra time at home, it's a perfect opportunity to refresh your home before 2019 starts. Here are some quick and easy ways to freshen up your home over your holiday break. The best part? If you're not having time off over the holidays, these changes can easily be made in your home over a weekend or an evening.

Move around your art and other wall decorations

Do you have art and mirrors on your walls around your home? Try changing where these pieces are displayed to freshen up how a room looks and feels. You could even try displaying art on a side table or on the floor in the corner of a room. And remember, you don't have to display all of your art and mirrors at once. This is also a perfect time to store or sell art that you've grown tired of seeing.

Restyle coffee tables, side tables and your kitchen

Changing what's displayed on your coffee tables, side tables and kitchen bench is a quick and easy way to change how a room feels. You could add some of your favourite books to your coffee table, a lucite tray, a candle and some fresh flowers. Alternatively, if you tend to display several items on your tables, you could try a minimalist approach and pack some of these items away. The key here is displaying items that make you feel at home while keeping things practical — think somewhere to store your remote controls and your phone.

Change your bookshelves and kitchen shelves

If you have bookshelves and open kitchen shelves, consider changing what's displayed in them. You could buy a small succulent plant, add some trinkets from a recent holiday to spaces on the shelf, or simply reorganise how your books are displayed. A quick search on Pinterest will provide you with lots of inspiration for organising your bookshelves. Extra points for creating an eye-catching display in organising your books by spine colour.

Pack away winter clothes

By now, you're probably well aware of the clothes and household items you reach for more in the warmer months.



If you haven't already, try packing away your winter clothes and household items leaving the items you frequently use in the warmer months within easy reaching distance. When you store clothing, make sure everything is stored in a cool, dry area. Space bags are perfect for making sure moisture and heat are kept away from delicate clothing.

Turn your bathroom into a spa

Try adding a couple of indulgent items to your bathroom. You could add a small indoor plant, a candle and a lush new hand towel to bring some luxury to your bathroom. With all of the affordable items available in stores today, you can bring a touch of luxury to your home without the price tag.

Organising and refreshing your home before the new year starts is an excellent way to start your year on a productive note. Remember, freshening up your home doesn't have to cost a lot. You could simply refresh your space by moving around some furniture and decluttering all of your wardrobes, linen cupboards, and kitchen cupboards and draws.

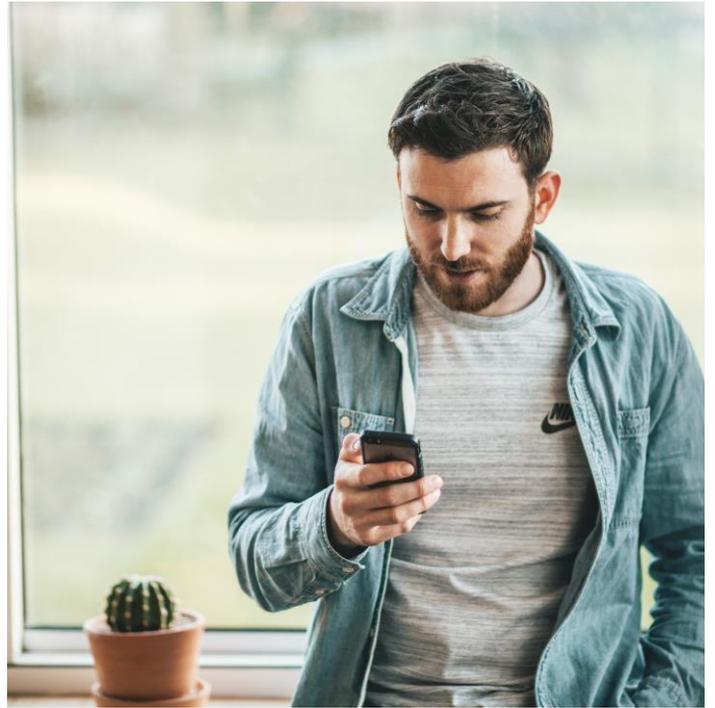
A LOOK AT THIS ISSUE:

Splitting your household bills - 2

Easy green smoothie - 3

HOW TO CONVENIENTLY SPLIT YOUR HOUSEHOLD BILLS.

Living with housemates has several benefits. It's an excellent way to meet new people and forge new friendships, and your living expenses are typically lower than if you lived on your own. One of the key challenges you may come across when you live with housemates is budgeting for common items and splitting household bills. As banking in Australia continues to become more technologically advanced, several apps have made it easier than ever to make sure everyone is paying their share of the household bills. Here are four apps that make splitting bills with your housemates quick and easy.



Easyshare

Developed especially for housemates, Easyshare makes it easy to upload bills and keep everyone in the loop on what's owed. To use the app, users simply download the app, add their payment details and invite their housemates to join. When a bill arrives, you can add the bill to the app. The app will calculate each person's share and organise payment. This can be done with all of the usual household expenses such as rent, electricity, gas, and internet. For other items such as shared groceries, you can set up an IOU to let a housemate know what's owing. The app will then debit the housemate's account. A 1.5 per cent transaction fee is charged for every transaction through the app.

Splitr

With Splitr, you can take a photo of a bill and the app will calculate the amount owing by each housemate. This app requires one person to make payment and collects reimbursements from the other housemates. For bills with a collection of items, such as a big grocery shop, you can assign payment for specific items to specific housemates.

Splitwise

With several features such as mediation services and "fairness" calculators, Splitwise is one of the more robust payment splitting apps available. To get started, add bill information into the app and detail how much money each housemate owes. The app also features an online ledger. This is handy if you want to keep track of multiple transactions and have a housemate pay you back in a lump sum.

The "fairness" calculator in the Splitwise app uses crowdsourced data to determine how costs should be split based on room size, air-conditioning and if housemates have shared or private bathrooms. Splitwise is free to download and doesn't have any transaction fees.

Finch

With Finch, users open a Finch account. This allows users to add funds to the Finch account. Credit and debit card details can also be added to make payments. If you make payments from the Finch account, there are no transaction fees. Money transfers between Finch users are instant.

With these apps, splitting the bills and other household expenses with your housemates doesn't have to be a headache. To make sure everyone is on the same page about splitting bills, it could be worthwhile having a short catch-up between all housemates, so you can all decide on an app, download it, and add each other straight away.

EASY GREEN SMOOTHIE



With holiday season here, the amount of treats we're surrounded by at work parties and family gatherings can be too tempting not to pass up. While it's a great time of year to indulge in your favourite treats, making sure you're eating healthy most of the time is crucial especially for your immune system. Taste.com.au's quick and easy green juice recipe is perfect for starting your day or as a late-afternoon pick-me-up.

Ingredients:

3 kale leaves, centre stem removed
 1 Lebanese cucumber, coarsely chopped
 1 lime, peeled, coarsely chopped
 1 green apple, cored, coarsely chopped
 2cm-piece fresh ginger, peeled, chopped
 1 mint sprig
 1 1/2 cups (375ml) no-added-sugar coconut water
 Mint sprigs, extra, to serve
 Lime wedges, to serve

Note: if you like your juice extra cold, and you have a high-powered blender, try adding some ice cubes before blending. For more sweetness, you could add some frozen mango cubes.

Method:

Step 1

Place kale, cucumber, lime, apple, ginger, mint and coconut water in a blender and blend until very smooth.

Step 2

Divide between serving glasses. Serve immediately with extra mint and lime.

Recipe source: <https://www.taste.com.au/recipes/green-smoothies/bf4a0d6b-4dea-4572-818a-418295d26148>

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