

September



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*"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn."*

- Benjamin Franklin

A Fresh Start This September

September is the perfect time to polish your routines and make a change. The kids are starting school, the seasons are changing, and summer festivals are coming to a close. For many of us, September has been a time for fresh starts from childhood – new folders, new pencils, new shoes, a fresh haircut, and a brand-new schedule.

Whether you want to make time for your favorite hobby, learn a new skill, solidify a healthy habit, or focus on a daily routine that makes your life flow, use these tips to make the most of this built-in September fresh start.

Plan ahead — Knowing what you're going to make for dinner, when the whole family will be together for game night, and who is picking up snacks for soccer practice alleviates a lot of stress. Meal planning alone can save hours, daily trips to the store, and the dreaded daily question, "What's for dinner?" A little time spent planning will help your life flow.

Make it easy — Set yourself up for success. If it's stressful trying to get out the door on time, pick out clothes the night before, pack the bags before bed, and prepare grab-and-go breakfasts. Whatever it is, how can you make it easier for yourself?

Delegate and outsource — You don't have to do everything all the time. Whether you decide to have your groceries delivered, have the kids do the dishes, or use a pre-planned exercise routine, it's okay to take some help where you need it. In the case of kids, it's not just helpful, but it's also great for them to have responsibilities and accomplishments.

Schedule the fun stuff — Leave room for downtime, creativity, learning, conversations, rest, and hobbies. It's important to leave time for movie night, date night, guitar lessons, and time to recharge in nature. A major key to successful change is for it to enhance your life, not wear you down. Avoid filling your life with so many responsibilities that there's no room left in it for you.

Focus on the process, not the outcome — Success is when you put in the work, the time, and the effort. Many of us have been conditioned to view the result as the only thing that matters – the final grade, the number on the scale, or the time on the clock. The thing that actually matters though, is that we show up.

Three Cheese Baked Pasta

allrecipes.com

Ingredients

- 1 pound uncooked pasta
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- 6 ½ cups tomato pasta sauce
- 6 ounces provolone cheese, thinly sliced
- 1 ½ cups sour cream
- 6 ounces mozzarella cheese, shredded
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Directions

1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Cook pasta in boiling water until al dente. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, cook ground meat and onion in a skillet over medium heat, stirring frequently, until meat is browned. Stir in pasta sauce, reduce heat, and simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease a 9x13 inch baking dish. Layer the ingredients in the prepared baking dish as follows: half of the cooked pasta, all the provolone cheese, all the sour cream, half of the sauce mixture, remaining pasta, mozzarella cheese, and remaining sauce mixture. Top with grated Parmesan cheese.
4. Bake in preheated oven for 30 minutes, or until bubbly.

Organize and Update Your Garage Without Spending a Fortune

If a complete garage remodel isn't in the picture this year, you can still spruce up your space with some of these easy, budget-friendly ideas to organize and update your garage.

Storage

Sporting equipment, tools, lawn care and snow removal, automotive... there's no shortage of stuff to store in the average garage. Use as much vertical space as possible. Wall shelves, hanging hooks, cabinets, peg boards – you can even hang shelves and hooks from the ceiling.

Build your own or purchase from an array of garage-friendly designs intended to hold supplies, tools, or plastic totes. Consider rolling or pull-out shelves to maximize space and specialized storage for specialized gear – like bicycles and your collection of fishing poles. Whatever you choose, ensure it's strong, durable, and easy to use.

Workspace

Without a space to work, any amount of storage feels inconvenient. You can repurpose an old desk or table or build a workspace into a wall of cabinets or shelves. Keep your most used tools nearby and handy. The backdrop of a workbench is a great place for a pegboard or a sheet metal magnet board.

Power and Light

Adding outlets around your garage, especially near the workstation, will make anything you plan to do easier. Ensure you have enough overhead light as well as task lights over any workspaces, and the garage is an ideal place for motion-activated lights.

Floors

A nice epoxy coating on the floor protects from cracks, grease, and stains and looks great. A layer of rubberized interlocking floor tiles can add visual appeal. But a good cleaning and patching can do wonders as well.

Insulation

Insulation on the walls and the overhead doors can keep your garage cooler in the summers and warmer in the winters – a great investment if you spend a lot of time in your garage year-round.

Just for Fun

And lastly, don't be shy about adding some personality to your garage. This is a great space for a bright, fun paint color on the walls and eclectic wall art. The way you display your tools in neat rows or arrange your kayaks on the wall can impact the feel of your space as well. There's no reason not to have a little fun in the garage.



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