

comfortable LIVING

SUMMER 2025



Getting Ahead of Energy Costs

Make Your Summer Indoor Comfort Plan Now

Can you believe it's summertime? While we love poolside popsicles as much as the next person, we also know that indoor comfort during hot weather can get expensive. However, with a little planning, you can get a handle on an indoor comfort strategy that also keeps your budget on track for a healthy, happy season of fun.

Evaluate Your Home's Insulation and Structure

First, consider your house. Do you have an older home with limited insulation and

lots of drafty windows and doors? If so, it's time to get busy fixing these issues before the temps get much higher. There are many cost effective insulation types now available. Consider upgrading to save money all year round on cooling and heating. Another great option: going solar! Installing panels on your home will also reduce energy costs. For 2025, there's a federal Investment Tax Credit available that may provide as much as a 30% tax credit for a new solar panel system. Check with your tax preparer to find out more.

Inspect and Upgrade Your Windows

Next, inspect all your windows. Are they leaking air to the outside? Even minor window repairs can go a long way to reducing drafts and improving energy efficiency. Think about using heavy curtains during the day to block the sun's rays from entering the home. In doing so, you'll be reducing the energy load on your

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Joke Time!

Q: What happens to an air conditioner when you pull the plug on it?

A: It loses its cool.

Q: How do gardeners learn?

A: Trowel and error.

Q: Why do bananas wear sunscreen?

A: Because they peel.



*Getting Ahead of Energy Costs
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air conditioner and lowering your utility costs too.

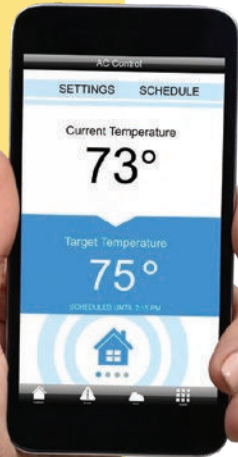
Install a Smart Thermostat for Greater Control

If you don't already have a smart thermostat, now is the time to get one. Old style thermostats don't have the energy saving functionality or the practical features even the simplest smart product now offers. Along with being able to monitor home energy use from your phone, you can program a smart thermostat to adjust the temps for your family's

comings and goings to stay comfortable without unnecessary expense. Check your smartphone app to make sure you're not cooling an empty house when no one is there to enjoy it, and easily create an HVAC usage timeline to fit your busy schedule.

Smart Cooling Habits Add Up

Finally, remember that it doesn't help to turn off your air conditioner completely when you're not home. Just turn up the thermostat a few degrees instead. Otherwise, your AC will have to work even harder upon your return to cool things off. Your indoor pets will appreciate it too. Remember, a little planning can yield big savings when it comes to HVAC. Stay cool ... and save a Creamsicle for us!



The Invasion of the Ant People: A Summertime Horror Movie

Okay, so this isn't a real film, but if you live in the Southland, you know it could be. Ants are a real issue here, especially with warmer weather. And you may not know this: ants can also wreak real havoc on even the best HVAC system. Late spring and early summer mean it's time to ant-proof your home as much as possible to prevent these little critters from taking over.

Ants Love Food — And Your Kitchen Might Be the Main Attraction

Ants love food. They'll go crazy for the smallest crumb, dog food spill, or dirty dish left in the sink. Then they'll call all their relatives to come over to enjoy it with them. Put away everything after a meal, and store dirty dishes in the dishwasher or make your teenager wash them right away (and then send them over to do our dishes, too!).



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Your Outdoor HVAC Unit Might Be an Ant Magnet

Remember to periodically inspect your HVAC unit outside for dead insects, debris or other attractants. Even a half-filled paper cup of lemonade left by the condenser can be enough to bring ant hordes from miles around.

Safe, Simple Ways to Keep Ants at Bay

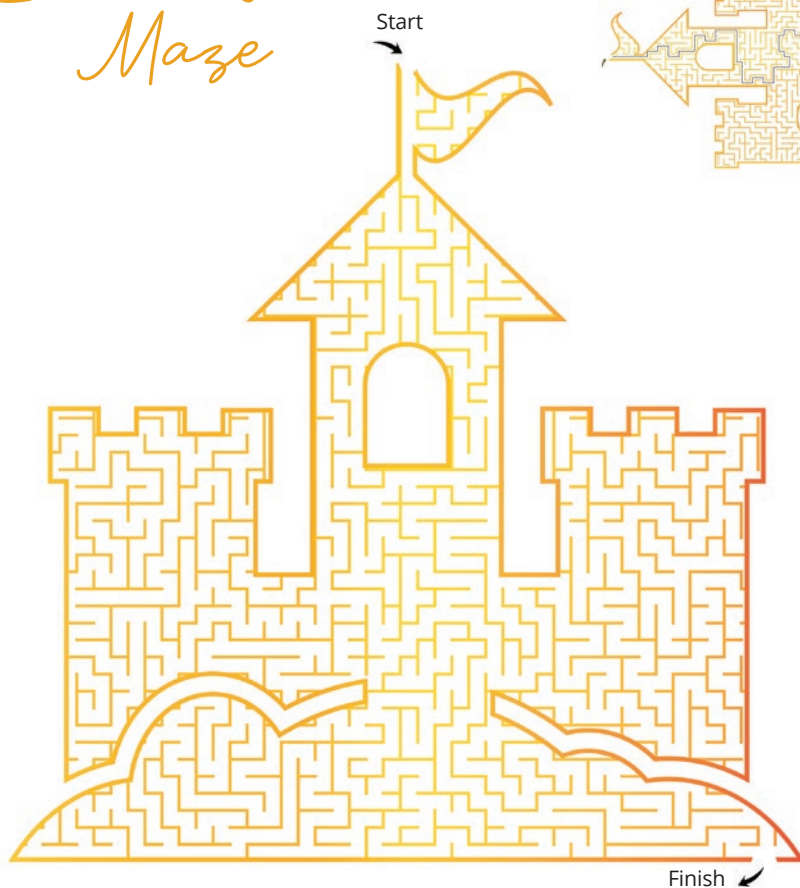
Pet-friendly ant bait stations or traps are now available. Set them around the inside doors and near the condenser to discourage these tiny pests. Consider using chalk indoors to draw lines over which ants won't cross (for a while, anyway). Growing peppermint or spearmint outside around your condenser is another safe option to try.

When to Call in the Pros

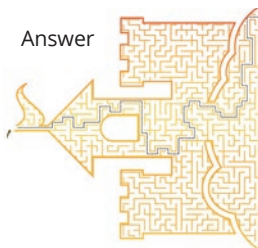
If none of this works, think about hiring a pest control company to inspect and treat your home. Even the most rigorous ant control techniques won't work if your home is sitting on a giant anthill. Stay vigilant, stay ant-free, and you'll also keep your heating and cooling system working well all season long.



Sandcastle Maze



Answer



Coupons

\$350 SURGE PROTECTOR (Normally \$465)

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I was very happy the tech diagnosed the problem quickly and had the replacement part in his truck. The cost of the repairs was very reasonable. I'm a satisfied customer and will call again next time my AC breaks. Thank you! — Perry M.

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Jell-O Strawberry Parfait Recipe



Ingredients

- 1 package (3oz) Jell-O brand gelatin, any flavor
- 1 cup sliced fresh fruit
- 1 cup thawed Cool Whip whipped topping

Directions

- Prepare gelatin according to package directions.
- Chill until slightly thickened.
- Set aside 1/3 cup.
- Add fruit to remaining gelatin; spoon into 4 to 5 glasses.
- Chill glasses at an angle until jello is set.
- Meanwhile, fold whipped topping into reserved (1/3 cup) gelatin.
- Spoon topping mixture into glasses of set jello.
- Chill.
- Garnish.

Source: <https://cookeatshare.com/recipes/jell-o-strawberry-parfait-616921>