



Judy Dempsey
Sales Representative

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Organization Tips for Winter Closets

In the cold and snowy months, what was once neatly tucked away in the far corner of the closet now needs to be ready to go every day. From coats to scarves, get all of your winter essentials organized with these helpful tips and tricks.

Organization Tips for Winter Closets

- **Make the most of hooks.** Install metal hooks on your closet walls or avoid drilling holes by using over-the-door or adhesive hooks instead. Hang scarves on them or designate a hook for each member of your household and give them canvas tote bags they can fill with winter gear. To encourage tidiness, surprise them with a personalized screen-printed bag.
- **Utilize space under coats.** To create extra storage space in this often-unused area, hang a shelf. Line the top with baskets or wire mesh storage drawers from the office supply store and tuck snow boots under the shelf. Give hats, gloves and scarves their own bins so you always know where to find them.
- **Use a hanging shoe organizer.** Inexpensive, over-the-door shoe racks are for more than just footwear! The pockets are the perfect place to stash



winter accessories like scarves (tightly roll them for easy storing), pairs of mittens and gloves, knit hats and fleece headbands.

Tip: Shoe organizers mean metal hooks hanging off the exterior of the closet door. As an alternative, try this simple solution: On the inside of the door, attach one adhesive hook towards the top and another near the bottom. Tie a piece of clothesline between them and attach your gear—or gloves that need to dry—with large kitchen clips. For a special touch, decorate the clothesline with ribbons and buttons.

- **Keep coats on slim hangers.** Outerwear is bulky enough as it is, so maximize space in small closets by using slim hangers for coats and jackets. Or try specialized slotted hangers that hold up to 5 individual hangers then collapse to half the size.
- **Try a store-bought solution.** Hanging organizer bags, available at most home goods stores, keep your accessories within easy reach. Usually made of sturdy fabric, they're about 6-8" wide and hang from the closet rod. Some even have wooden inserts that turn the pockets into stable shelves!

Market Watch for January 2011

"At the outset of 2010, we were experiencing annual rates of price growth at or near 20 per cent. This was the result of extremely tight market conditions coupled with the fact that we were comparing prices to the trough of the recession at the beginning of 2009," said Jason Mercer, TREB's Senior Manager of Market Analysis. "Balanced market conditions in the second half of 2010 resulted in more moderate home price appreciation," continued Mercer. "Expect the average selling price to grow at or below five per cent in 2011. With this type of growth, mortgage carrying costs for the average priced home in the GTA will remain affordable for a household earning an average income."

December Market Stats				TERM	BANK RATE
	December 2009	December 2010	% of Change		
Sales	5,541	4,395	(-21%)	1 YEAR	3.35%
New Listing	5,506	4,284	(-22%)	2 YEAR	3.60%
Active Listings*	10,292	11,245	(9%)	3 YEAR	4.16%
Days on Market	27	37	(37%)	4 YEAR	4.94%
				5 YEAR	5.19%
				Prime	3.00%
				Variable	2.85%

* All figures for single-family dwellings.

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Cider Recipes

It's easy to warm up a chilly crowd with these hot apple cider punches - and they're non-alcoholic.



Cider Punch

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 12 whole cloves
- 2 large apples (Granny Smith or Rome Beauty), peeled and left whole
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- ground nutmeg

Pour the apple cider into a large pot. Insert 6 cloves into each apple, and add the apples and cinnamon sticks to the pot. Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer over very low heat for 1 hour. Ladle into heat-resistant mugs and dust with ground nutmeg to serve. Note: The punch can be made a day ahead and refrigerated, covered. Warm over low heat before serving.

Hot Mulled Cider

This crowd-sized punch can also easily be made in a large crockpot and allowed to simmer all day. The house will smell wonderful!

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 1 tsp. whole cloves
- 1 tsp. whole allspice
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- cheesecloth square
- string

Make an infusion bag with the spices and cheesecloth. Place the cloves, allspice and cinnamon sticks on the cheesecloth square, and tie closed with the string. Set aside.

Combine the apple cider and brown sugar in a large pot over medium heat. Add the infusion bag and heat the mixture until almost boiling. Reduce heat and let simmer for at least 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve hot.

Hot Buttered Cider

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 2 sliced oranges
- 2-3 cinnamon sticks
- butter

Combine the cider, oranges, and cinnamon sticks in a large saucepan and heat on medium heat. Let simmer for 5-10 minutes before removing from heat. Place 1-2 teaspoons of butter in the bottom of each mug, and ladle the cider over.

