



simple spring cleaning

You have better things to do at your cabin than scrub the floors, so leave the cleaning to someone else. Using microfiber or disposable Swiffer-style cloths, the Mint Plus 5200 robot automatically navigates through your home to sweep and mop, making every inch of floor space sparkle. You will have to lift a finger, but that's all. \$300. (888-543-6468; mintcleaner.com)



Harsh cleansers can wreak havoc on your possessions and add toxic elements to your environment, but all-natural products can get the same job done with fewer ill effects. Using time-tested formulas that have been updated to tackle contemporary surfaces and spills, Bon Ami Company's soft but effective ingredients will polish any household surface back to a gleaming shine. \$3-\$15. (888-225-9315; bonami.net)



Sink starting to smell? Dull disposal blades taking forever to process your kitchen waste? GrabGreen offers an eco-friendly disposal freshener and cleaner that helps keep your disposal spotless, pleasantly fragrant and properly functioning for years to come. Just toss one of the premeasured pods down the drain, turn on the water, and activate your disposal. Available in Thyme with Fig Leaf, Tangerine with Lemongrass and Red Pear with Magnolia scents. \$4.50 for 12 pods. (888-841-4722; grabgreenhome.com)



For easy spot cleaning, the DirtTamer Ultima cordless hand vacuum provides wet/dry capabilities and High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filtration. With up to 400 percent more suction than other hand vacs and three cleaning tools to get every last speck of dust, it's perfect for cleaning your home or car. Its three-stage HEPA filtration system removes 99.7 percent of dust, pollen, bacteria and other allergens for high-quality air as well. \$90. (866-625-3218; filterstream.com)



The average American home uses more than 100,000 gallons of water each year, predominantly for landscaping applications. Reduce your dependence on your municipal or well-water source by installing a rain barrel at the bottom of your downspouts, which will collect rainwater for outdoor use, keep water away from your home's foundation and basement, and reduce erosion on your property. Plow & Hearth's 50-gallon Rain Barrel features a convenient spigot for hose attachment. \$200. (800-494-7544; plowandhearth.com)



How does your garden grow? With the TimelapseCam 8.0 by Wingscapes, watch weeks of growth beautifully unfold in seconds, giving you instant gratification for hours of hard work. The weatherproof digital camera takes photos at set time intervals, then splices them together to create a smoothly transitioning movie that quickly shows every stage of your plant or garden's development. \$110. (888-811-9464; wingscapes.com)



For a nutrient-rich growth medium that encourages your garden to thrive, compost is king. Fortunately, it's cheap and easy to make using leftover kitchen scraps — albeit a little messier than you might like. The Automatic Composter by Uncommon Goods makes kitchen composting as clean and simple as tossing away your trash.

This effortless appliance fits underneath your counter or sink, and generates a fresh batch of compost in two weeks. \$395. (888-365-0056; uncommongoods.com)

great garden gadgets



It's nice when butterflies, birds or dragonflies visit while you're working in the garden, but other winged visitors aren't nearly as welcome. Wind and Weather's handmade glass wasp catchers hang from hooks and branches around your garden to trap wasps before they can bother you. Simply fill each jug with a natural sugar solution; wasps enter at the base and stay trapped inside. \$30 for a set of three. (877-255-3700; windandweather.com)

getaway gear

fun outdoor tools

Enter to win this! See page 63.



From journal writing to field note-taking to map marking, there are lots of reasons to jot something down while you're out in the elements. However, soggy paper makes record-keeping impossible. Rite in the Rain's oil-coated paper notebooks and all-weather pens allow you to write even in a downpour. Used by rainforest botanists and deep-sea fishermen in a variety of extreme conditions, these products are sure to hold up during your next excursion. Notebooks \$4–\$19; pens \$9–\$25. (253-922-5000; riteintherain.com)

Whether as an emergency communication option or a cool playtime gadget, the Talkabout MS350R two-way radios by Motorola are an invaluable tool for outdoors-minded families. These nearly indestructible waterproof devices have up to a 35-mile range and feature flashlights, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather reports, eight repeater channels and hands-free capabilities. Plus, they float, making them a worry-free staple for any outdoor adventure. \$100 per pair. (800-638-5119; motorola.com)

The name Swiss Army has been synonymous with good-quality knives since 1884, but the company's latest innovation brings it firmly into the 21st century. The Victorinox Secure features the standard scissors, nail file, screwdriver and detachable switchblade functions found on previous models, along with a ballpoint pen, LED light and flash drive. It also features biometric fingerprint security to ensure your stored information is protected. A bladeless version is available for frequent fliers. \$105–\$793 for 8–128GB. (800-442-2706; swissarmy.com)



Clean, safe drinking water is an essential, but it's also one of the heaviest things to carry on an extended camping or backpacking trip. The Adventurer Opti with Solar Charging Case by SteriPEN can sterilize water in any environment. Just insert the charged pen into your water container, and activate the UV light to kill illness-causing microbes. To recharge the pen, simply place the case in view of the sun, or use the included plug-in adapter. \$150. (888-783-7473; steripen.com)



Enter to win this! See page 63.



It's always interesting to watch a bird help himself at a feeder, but it's even better when the bird gets an unexpected ride with his meal. J Schatz Mobile Bird Feeders dip and sway when set in motion by a breeze or an unsuspecting bird, and they add a touch of modern art to your garden, deck or patio. Available in side- and top-feeding designs and dozens of color combinations. \$195–\$395. (866-344-5267; jschatz.com)

for the birds



Even when it's cold outside, wild birds need to drink and groom themselves. Place the Country Gardens Solar Bird Bath outside your window, and watch as winged visitors stop by for a dip and a sip. A solar panel operates a water recirculation pump to keep it fresh, as well as two fountain heads that provide an umbrella spray or bubble effect. To ensure the water's liquid state during colder months, add an inexpensive heater. \$248.50. (360-722-1170; gardenaccentheaven.com)

Enter to Win!

Get your hands on a Rite as Rain **notebook** and **pen set** and a pair of Motorola **two-way radios** (see page 62) by visiting countrysbestcabins.com/contest for our online giveaways. Enter by Feb. 29 for your chance to win.



Make local wild birds feel right at home by adding a Duncraft Eco-View Window Bird House to one of your windows. From the quiet vantage point of your breakfast table or den, you can watch as winged inhabitants build a nest, lay and hatch their eggs, and raise and feed their fledglings. Built of recycled materials, this nesting box is easier to clean and more durable than wood, and it provides a healthier atmosphere for those inside. \$60. (888-879-5095; duncraft.com)