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# Between FRIENDS

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## Health & Safety

### A Splash of Safety:

#### Pool and Hot Tub Safety Tips for Homeowners

**P**ool season is here, and it's imperative to implement water safety precautions to help prevent life-threatening accidents. If you have a pool or hot tub at your home—or enjoy aquatic activities in the summertime—here are some general guidelines to ensure a fun and safe water season:

**Secure the area.** A fence should encircle the perimeter of the water to keep children and pets out. Use self-latching gates or alarms as an extra measure of safety.

**Maintain pool equipment.** Appropriate maintenance is essential for pool and hot tub safety. Regularly inspect the circulation system and drains, pool toys and floats, and lighting to ensure that systems function properly, floats are not punctured, and the floor of the pool is visible.

**Limit soak time.** Enforce strict time limits for soaking in the hot tub. Healthy adults should only spend 15-30 minutes in water temperatures between 95 and 100 degrees. Pregnant women and young children should not soak in a hot tub.

**Keep life-saving devices handy.** Ensure everyone in the household is trained in CPR and basic water rescue skills. Keep lifebuoys and first aid kits in an accessible place near the water.



## Real Estate Today

### The Road to Home: Tips for New Homebuyers

**H**omeownership remains the zenith of the American Dream. Whether you're shopping for your first or forever home, ensure you have your ducks in a row. Here are some tips for understanding your budget, choosing the right location, and hiring the best agent on your journey to homeownership:

**Establish a realistic budget.** Obtain pre-approval from a bank or mortgage company to understand your buying capacity and streamline the homebuying process. Consider additional costs, such as closing fees, property taxes, and possible upgrades.

**Research neighborhoods.** Ask friends and join neighborhood Facebook groups to get the inside scoop about your desired location. Consider factors such as school zoning, commute times, and amenities.

**Use a reputable real estate agent.** Choose a real estate agent who is qualified to guide you through the ins and outs of homebuying. Rely on their industry expertise and invaluable negotiation skills to help you make an informed decision!

**Be patient.** The homebuying process can be tedious. You may not find the perfect home in your first week of shopping. Be patient and flexible as you work with your real estate agent to find your dream home.



## Savor the Flavor

## Easy Seafood-Salad

### Ingredients

**1 lb. cooked lobster meat**  
**2-3 tbsp. mayonnaise**  
**1/3 c. diced celery**  
**1/2 tsp. lemon zest**  
**1/2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice**  
**1 tbsp. chopped chives**  
**1/2 tsp. hot sauce**  
**1/4 tsp. salt**  
**1/4 tsp. pepper**  
**4 tbsp. butter**  
**4 split-top buns**  
**1/4 head of lettuce**

Drain the lobster meat and absorb excess moisture with a paper towel. Cut the lobster meat into chunky pieces.

Mix the mayonnaise, diced celery, lemon juice and zest, chives, hot sauce, salt, and pepper in a large bowl.

Warm the butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add the lobster and toss the meat until it is well-coated when the butter is melted. Cook for two minutes. Remove the lobster meat with a slotted spoon, allowing excess butter to drain. Add lobster to the mayonnaise mixture.

In a clean skillet, add the remaining butter and warm over medium heat. Coat the buns in the melted butter and toast until golden brown on both sides.

Shred the lettuce and place a bed of lettuce in each split-top bun. Add 1/4 of the lobster mixture to each bun. Sprinkle with chives and serve immediately.



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## Household Tips: **Patio Upgrades on a Budget**

**T**ransforming your patio into an outdoor oasis shouldn't break the bank. You can achieve an envy-worthy patio on a budget with some creative planning and effort. Here are some tips for upgrading your outdoor space:

**Clean and declutter.** Give the area a good scrubbing and remove clutter. Consider incorporating fragrances, such as an oil diffuser, scented candle, or plug-in air freshener.

**Anchor the aesthetic with a rug.** Arrange outdoor furniture in a way that is welcoming and cozy. Tie the look together with outdoor throw pillows and an outdoor rug.

**Incorporate greenery.** Use plant stands and colorful planters to house cascading blooms. If your patio is covered, consider ferns, coleus, or Hosta for a natural touch.

**String some lights.** Nothing elevates outdoor ambiance quite like a strand of well-placed outdoor lights. String some lights to create a chic and welcoming patio.

**Don't forget the final touches.** Personalize the space with some extra touches that reflect your style. Include outdoor art, a clock, a doormat, or a reading nook to give the patio some personality. Be sure to use color schemes that bring you joy and décor that reflects your taste and personality.

