

Slim home

Looking at the Cleveland, what you see is a small home with a nostalgic Craftsman flavor. You might assume that it has no garage, but you'd be wrong. The garage is attached to the home at the rear.

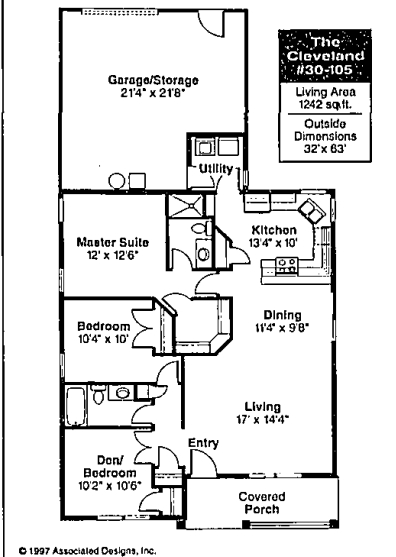
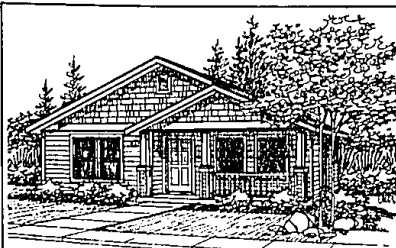
A mere 32 feet wide, this plan is designed to fit on a narrow lot with an alley behind. A small community of similar homes could be built on minimal acreage.

The designers have packed a surprising array of popular features into living space that measures in at approximately 1,250 square feet, plus garage. Family living areas, for instance, flow together from front to back, creating a sense of spaciousness that would be lost if the rooms were individually walled.

Counter and cupboard space is ample in a kitchen that is open to the dining room. There's even a small pantry, along with a sunny space for plants in front of the sink. Standing at the stove, you can chat with guests and family members seated at the dining table.

The eating bar doubles as a buffet for festive meals, and sliding glass doors brighten the dining space. If the lot is wide enough, these doors could provide access to a side patio.

Utilities are tucked in a pass-through alcove that connects the garage to the house. Three bedrooms and two bathrooms



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span the left side. The front bedroom could be outfitted as a den or home office. A large skylight brightens the main bathroom.

The Cleveland's master suite is small, but it boasts a roomy walk-in closet and private bathroom.

Prepare for the first fall frost

By LEE REICH
FOR AP SPECIAL FEATURES

The first frost of fall is soon to descend on many gardens. If it is a severe frost, it brings the season of summer vegetables and flowers to a dramatic end. The juicy tomatoes, cucumbers and eggplants of summer quickly bow out to the succulent, green cabbages, broccoli and lettuce of the fall. The bright, summery colors of marigolds and zinnias are replaced by the subdued, fall colors of chrysanthemums and asters.

Unfortunately, the date for the arrival of the first fall frost is unpredictable. Even within your county, the date for the first frost could vary by a week or more. Even in your own back yard, the date for the first frost can vary markedly from one year to the next.

Half the time, the first killing frost occurs by Oct. 3, according to the MSU Extension Service. With this date in mind, prepare for your garden's first frost before it occurs. Do not worry about perennial plants, which include woody trees, shrubs, and vines, flowers such as daisies and daylilies, and vegetables such as asparagus and rhubarb. They all are hardy. The same is true for certain annual flowers, such as snapdragons and pansies, and vegetables such as lettuce, cabbage and root crops.

Tender plants that succumb to that first frost include vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, squashes, and beans, and flowers such as marigolds, zinnias and dahlias. Most houseplants are tropical plants that cannot tolerate any frost at all. Move them indoors soon.

Have some plastic sheets, blankets or bedsheets ready, and if the first frost arrives early, drape these coverings over tender plants for protection. For even better protection, hold the covering off plant leaves with stakes. (This is an advantage of staked tomato plants; the stakes are

already there). Some years, an early frost is followed by a long, balmy Indian summer, and if you can keep that first frost from nipping tender plants, you can eat a few extra tomatoes and peppers in the fall.

If covering plants does not seem worth the trouble, or the temperature is predicted to plummet, start picking. This is the time to fill baskets with tomatoes and peppers, and jars of water with the last marigolds and zinnias of the season ... all last-ditch efforts to hang onto summer.

Some years, that first killing frost postpones its visit until late in the season. In such years, tender plants remain alive, but they wane as temperatures cool and days shorten. Even before such a late frost finally arrives, pick tomatoes to ripen indoors where their flavor will be better than those ripened in the chilly outdoors. When such a late frost finally does arrive, it lacks the fanfare of an early frost.

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- Clean or replace your furnace filter — a clogged filter can restrict proper air flow and force your furnace to work harder.

- Check your furnace for dust and lint — remove the dust and lint from the burner compartment annually. Turn off the electric power before doing this task.

- Check the chimney and flue pipe — obstructions can prevent flue gases from venting properly, possibly leading to carbon monoxide poisoning.

- Check the furnace belt for wear and tension.

- Keep the area surrounding the furnace clean and clear of debris.

MichCon urges homeowners if you must relight the pilot, always follow the manufacturers instructions located on the furnace or in the manual. If uncertain, contact a qualified appliance dealer. MichCon offers a free referral service of qualified natural gas appliance dealers in your area by calling 1-800-929-6068.

To reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, have an annual inspection of all fuel-burning appliances and properly care for your appliances. To order an carbon monoxide detector directly from MichCon, call 1-800-427-4207.

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