

ULTIMATE GUIDE TO INTERIOR DECOR

MAKE YOUR
HOME
BREATHE



OLIVER SMITH

ABSTRACT

Call us optimists, but we think everyone under the sun can have a beautiful home if they want one. Even if you're pinching pennies, there's still plenty you can do to create a stylish, inviting home for yourself and whoever you have over. The first step (and this is true no matter where or how you live) is to clean your home and get organized. Doing those two things alone will drastically improve the quality of your space. Then for the fun part—on to coming up with new room décor ideas.

#1 - HOW TO DECORATE THE INTERIOR OF YOUR HOME IN AUSTRALIA



This time of year is perfect for seeking out house decorating ideas to update your interior. Never underestimate the power of a weekend makeover to refresh your home and mind.

1. ADD PERSONALITY TO A HALL

"Hallways and entrances are often neglected spaces and can feel cold and empty. Laying a runner on the floor will immediately add a warm, welcoming touch. Even in a small space, layering is important – interesting wall treatments such as a fabulous wallpaper and key pieces of furniture such as an elegant, slim console that fits the space perfectly will do wonders," says Greg Natale, interior designer at Greg Natale Design.



2. SPLASH OUT WITH PAINT

"There's no faster route to finding renewed love for your home than a paint project. For instant impact on a hallway staircase, paint the risers in varying shades of one colour, starting darker on the bottom step through to the lightest pastel shade of that colour at the top. You could also consider a similar treatment on the ladder of a child's bunk bed, picking up other shades in the surrounding walls and trims," says Andrea Lucena-Orr, colour planning and communications manager at Dulux.

3. LAY A SUMPTUOUS RUG

"If you're looking to define a space and engage the senses, look no further than a stylish rug. Right now, textures are huge – think undyed wools, nettle yarns and the relaxed, organic feel of bamboo silks. Classic designs with a distressed finish in understated shades of blues, silvers and copper are also trending. For a chic and unexpected vibe, lay a vintage rug in a contemporary setting – a tribal rug in a minimalist room, for example. And remember, a quality rug will last for years, so it pays to maintain it. Vacuum without bristles regularly, taking particular care of the fringes, and rotate rugs in high-traffic or sunny spots to even out wear and exposure," says Bob Cadry, managing director at Cadrys.

4. PULL THE OTHER ONE



"Black opaque door hardware is one of the biggest trends right now, as is Art Deco-influenced designs in modern finishes such as rose gold, polished nickel and satin-finished brass. It's best to hire a professional to replace your door hardware although most kitchen and cupboard knobs can easily be swapped yourself," says Simone Pittella, managing director at Pittella.

5. JAZZ UP THE JOINERY

"The kitchen is one of the easiest rooms to refresh if you're short on time and money. The fastest trick is to simply paint the existing joinery. I love matt blue and green finishes for cabinetry paired with brass hardware. Or, replace the old tiles with ones that are modern and fresh," says Thomas Hamel, interior designer at Thomas Hamel & Associates.

6. SWAP OUT YOUR SPLASHBACK

"Changing your splashback to coloured glass adds a nice, clean element and it is easy to maintain as there are no grout lines. My favourites include simple white or smoky-grey glass," says Thomas Hamel

7. TURN ON THE TILES



"Replacing dated floor or wall tiles will give your bathroom an immediate lift. Geometric-patterned concrete tiles are a great option for the floor; if you want a more dramatic look, consider running them up one wall as well. If you've already updated your tapware to this season's aged brass or rose gold, echo that luxe finish in your bathroom accessories; think a brass or gold tumbler or soap pump. Finish off with a

tray to contain all your bathroom accessories. It's a stylish storage solution and makes cleaning surfaces easier," says Greg Natale.

8. AMP UP THE ACCESSORIES

"Updating the tapware and accessories lets you transform your bathroom into a luxurious, spa-like haven without the cost of a full-blown renovation. Current tapware trends range from the sleek and slimline to the geometric, in combinations of different colours and materials in a single design, as seen in Milli Axon's gleaming chrome or rose gold paired with black. Add in plenty of storage to keep clutter to a minimum – the Kado Lure storage seats on castors are a personal favourite – plus scented candles and soft, fluffy towels," says Daniela Santilli, business manager at Reece.

#2 - INTERIOR DECORATION IDEAS ON A BUDGET

With years of budget decorating behind (and in front of!) us, we've amassed a few helpful tips for making house with a slim wallet. Follow our cheap home decorating tips and get inspired by the ideas that prove that style doesn't need to come at a price below.

Paint an Accent Wall

Painting your walls on your own is one of the most cost-effective decorative updates you can make to your home and painting just one wall is an affordable (and seriously cool) upgrade.

Disguise a Dated Sofa with a Slipcover

Rather than buying an entirely new sofa, purchase a simple slipcover to give your space a new look.

Get Rid of Unsightly Items

Before you start worrying about what you can and cannot afford to buy, consider what you should get rid of. Dated, worn, or damaged items could be doing the look of your home a disservice, and if they're non-essential, removing them can give your home a clean slate.

Add Trim to Your Curtains

Instead of buying new curtains, invest in what you already own by adding an iron-on trim to basic curtain panels.

Hang Prints

Framed prints don't have to be expensive, but they can transform a room. If you're really ready for a project, try your hand at your own art piece and frame your creation to hang on its own or as part of a gallery wall.

Pot a Plant

Faux plants can make for chic décor at a low price. Find an affordable option and then style it on a beautiful stand or in a handcrafted pot.

Set Up Sales Alerts

If you're dead-set on something that's out of your price range, try to buy it on sale. You can use ShopStyle to set a sale alert for products from literally hundreds of major brands; just enter your search filters or terms and press the pink "Add Sale Alert" button and you'll be emailed when the item goes on sale. Retailers like Overstock, Amazon, and Macy's will also alert you when something goes on sale or returns after being out of stock.

Hide the Cords

You can find cord concealers on Amazon for just \$15. Hiding unsightly cords and wires by the TV or lighting fixtures will go a long way in making your home look effortlessly clean and organized.

Give an Old Ladder New Life

That old wooden ladder sitting in your garage could be your next favorite décor piece. Clean one up with a bit of sandpaper and maybe even a coat of paint, then use it to store spare towels or throw blankets.

Go Thrift Shopping

Buying used (pre-loved) pieces of furniture and décor is a great way to save on things that may otherwise cost you a pretty penny. You never know what hidden gems you'll stumble upon at a thrift store or flea market.

Customize an End Table

With a bit of paint and a little imagination, you can make a tired end table feel brand new. Consider painting the edge of a simple black piece in gold, for instance.

Turn Plates Into Wall Art

If you never use the china plates from your wedding or you love the look of a cheap set you scored from H&M, plates can make for some seriously chic wall décor. Hang a few in a cluster on a blank wall for an instant update.

#3 - ROOM-BY-ROOM HOME DECORATION BASICS



You may well have a general decorating style chosen for your entire home, but within the overall style, each room has its own purpose and style. How the room is used, and by whom, should be considered as you arrange each room and choose materials, accessories, and accents.

Consider the needs of each individual room, and research related articles pertaining to those spaces. Home decor should reflect your personal taste and interests, but it must also address the particular function of those rooms.

01 - Living Rooms and Family Rooms

Living rooms can fill many functions, from a formal "parlor" used to greet guests to a space where the whole family gathers for study, entertainment, socializing, and play. In modern homes, the living room is often a "great room" that is contiguous with the kitchen and dining area.

One of the first considerations is choosing a focal point for the living room and especially where you want to create conversation areas. Your selection and arrangement of living room furniture should keep this element in mind. Only then can you move to the details of planning lighting, then you can begin choosing area rugs, art, and accessories.

After redecorating your Living Room there might be some dust that can accumulate on your couch. Neglecting the deep cleaning of your couch will make things harder for you. The negligence will also promote the growth of germs, bacteria and mould, which can lead to different types of allergies. If you want to perform the cleaning of your couch on your own, you must have knowledge of the correct technique.

Here are some tips -

Preparing To Clean

Before you steam clean your couch, it is important that you prepare for the cleaning in the correct manner. Otherwise, you won't get the desired result.

Vacuum the Couch Properly

First, use a vacuum cleaner on the surface of the couch to remove dust, dirt, allergens, trash, pet hair, dander, etc. Some of these things can make your couch even dirtier if they get wet during the cleaning process.

Pre-treat the stains

If you see any stains on the couch, then it is advisable to pre-treat it. Apply spot cleaner over the stains and leave for some time so that the solution can break down the stain. After that, use a soft cloth to blot the spot to absorb the stain and remove the moisture of the spot cleaner. It is one of the best tips for removing common household stains.

Cleaning The Couch

Once you are prepared, it is time to clean the couch surface. Using the right tools and following the correct technique will help you complete the task in a hassle-free manner. As a result, you will get the best result.

Choose the right steam cleaner

There are various steam cleaners in the market to clean different kinds of materials. The best steam cleaners for the couch are upholstery steam cleaners, handheld steam cleaners and fabric steam cleaners. People hire professional bond cleaning in Sunshine Coast because their professionals always have the right cleaner.

Prepare the machine

To use the machine, first, you need to add cleaner and water to the machine. The proportion may vary depending on the model you have, so you should follow the instruction in the manual. In general, you need to remove a container from the machine and fill it with upholstery cleaner and warm water.

Begin with the cushions

A couch generally has removable pillows, so you should start cleaning them first. All you need to do is to turn on the machine and press a button to release the steam on the surface of the cushions. After that, use other attachments to suck all the excess moisture from the surface.

Steam clean the rest

After cleaning the cushions, you need to clean the rest of the couch surface. Apply the steam over a small surface and suck the excess moisture. Cover the entire surface in the same manner.

Let your Couch dry

Once you are done with the steam cleaning, you must leave the couch to get air dry. Turn on the fan of that room and if possible, open the windows for some time. It is one of the smart cleaning tips that you should always follow.

Removing Remaining Stains

After cleaning the surface of the couch, a stubborn stain can still be visible. You need to make some extra effort to get rid of them. Otherwise, you can opt for a certified end of lease cleaners in Sunshine Coast.

Clean the stain with water and soap

If the stains are still visible, dip a sponge in water and wring it properly. Apply a little liquid soap and blot the stained area. Then clean the spots using a damp cloth and leave it to get air dry.

Use vinegar

Instead of using soap and water, you can also use vinegar. Pour some vinegar on a piece of cloth and rub the spots gently in a circular way. It will most likely to remove the stains from the couch.

Use heavy-duty cleaner

If none of these works, then you need to use a store-bought product and use it as per the instruction. However, it will be a much better option to hire seasoned end of lease cleaners. They have expertise in removing such stains using natural products, which is beneficial for the health of the environment.

02 - Armchairs, rug and bed in modern bedroom

You spend a third of your life in the bedroom, so you should carefully consider strategies for making it a restful place. Start with choosing the bed and the other bedroom furniture. While you may be able to save money in other areas, buying a good-quality mattress and pillows is always a sound investment.

Your choice of color is also critical in a bedroom. Choose a lighter hue if you are a morning person, or a darker color if you are a later riser. The bedroom lighting is important for setting the right mood, as well as for allowing you to read and get dressed in the space.

If you don't have a large primary suite, look for practical ideas for decorating small bedrooms. And guest bedrooms have their own unique needs for decorating.

03 - Children's Rooms

For decorating kids' rooms, it's still common practice to use themes traditionally assigned to boys and girls, although today's parents are increasingly sensitive to making kids' bedrooms more gender-neutral.

A nursery for an infant has its own decorating needs, especially where young families where budget may be a consideration.

04 - Bathrooms

Do you want to turn your master bath into an elegant spa? Then research general design ideas for bathrooms, including how to make the room feel soft and sophisticated and how to choose the cabinets, tile, sinks, mirrors, lighting, and accessories. In small bathrooms, the challenge is decorating it to make it feel and look larger.

If your new bathroom involves a full remodeling project, look for tips on working with contractors. Other key decisions will be choosing colors and selecting the right vanity and sink for your bathroom.

05 - Kitchens

Modernist new build in the south of Spain designed by Matteo Thun

The kitchen can be an expensive room to remodel, so you'll want to carefully plan your project. If a complete remodel is not affordable or practical, there are any number of budget kitchen makeovers you can consider—including a deep cleaning, freshening the paint, adding light fixtures, replacing cabinet hardware, adding new accessories, and replacing the sink and faucet.

Finally, simple decorating choices all on their own can make a kitchen look brand new. And of course, these decorating choices are part of any budget kitchen makeover or major remodeling project.

06 - Dining Rooms

The dining room table is the centerpiece of the room, so its choice and placement are critical to any decorating project. Choosing the right furnishings can be especially important for a small dining room. Other important elements to consider are the chairs and the chandelier—both of which help define your style and set the tone for meals.

Finally, give careful consideration to the curtains and drapes and to your tableware.

07 Foyers

A foyer should be an inviting space that sets the tone for the rest of your dwelling, but there are also many practical things to be considered as you design and decorate your foyer. Flooring, storage, and fixtures are all important considerations in designing a foyer.

08 - Home Offices

You will have different needs if you will be seeing clients in your home office and using the space for professional reasons. But even if it is just a place for you to conduct family business, there are specific tips for planning and decorating a home office. Where budget is a consideration, seek out money-saving options.

#4 - HOME DECORATING FOR BEGINNERS

You're all grown up with a real job and an apartment of your very own. As you start life's big journey, you suddenly realize it's time to look and act the part of a responsible adult. You dream of inviting friends and family over for a sophisticated evening of cocktails and dinner, but sadly your place still looks like a college dorm room.

As much as you'd love to completely decorate your home, the reality of a limited budget leaves little left for all the furnishings. To help you get on your decorating feet, we're sharing valuable design tips that will make your place look fabulous without cleaning out your bank account.

Begin by Determining Your Decor Style



Start by choosing the perfect style for your home. Instead of decorating each room in a different style, think about a unifying design concept. This will give your home a harmonious look and feel.

Now decide on whether you prefer formal or casual. Finally, narrow it down to a particular style, such as modern, industrial, vintage, traditional, country or bohemian.

Do some research and decide which type of interior style is your favorite.

Color and Patterns Are Key Decorating Details

Picking the perfect color scheme takes time and is an important part of your home's overall design. While you may want to use a different color in each room, keep it simple by creating a consistent look. Using similar colors will make your home look cohesive.

Various fabric patterns are a little more difficult to incorporate into a room. They don't exactly have to match, but the colors and sizes should work with each other. Use at least three patterns in the same scale and equally disburse them throughout the space.

Don't Skimp on Essential Pieces



When you're decorating for the first time, an interior designer will tell you to spend as much as you can afford on major furniture such as a sofa, dining room furniture, and a quality bed.

Investment furniture works like your go-to black dress or favorite jacket—they're the foundation for everything else. You can always take the budget route with secondary pieces like side tables, ottomans, throw pillows, bedding, art and lighting to pull it all together.

Get Familiar With Basic Elements and Principles of Design

Interior design principles may seem a little daunting, but you can easily make sense out of these basics. Just think about the placement of furnishings that balance visual weight in the room. If you like a traditional style, the use of symmetry will make you happy. Casual or modern interiors lean more toward asymmetrical.

A focal point is an element intended to catch your eye as you walk into a room. It is a component that stands out from the other design elements. The center of attention can be anything, such as an accent wall, a large window, television, artwork or a fireplace.

Don't forget to incorporate the principles of scale, proportion, color and texture. Scale relates to the room size. Proportion makes a visual connection to the shape and size of similar items. Another principle is rhythm, which creates order, repetition, progression and movement with color, shapes and texture.

Seek Furniture and Artwork With Character



You certainly don't want your place to look like pages out of the Pottery Barn catalog. There's nothing like a vintage furniture piece to impart quality and character to your home. Adding in a few vintage items creates an interesting, personal and inviting space.

We're not talking about Grandpa's broken-down recliner or Aunt Emma's plastic-covered sofa. We're referring to good deals on solid furniture like a mid-century coffee table or an art deco hutch. Scour your local paper for estate and garage sales or online sites like Chairish and Craigslist for steals and deals.

Invest in transportable furnishings. When first starting out you're more than likely to move several times before settling down in the home of your dreams. A chair or dresser can go along with you, but it will be impossible to take wallpaper, shiplap or custom-made window treatments.

Instead of special permanent touches that remain behind, consider investing in artwork to make your home a personal statement. You don't necessarily have to spend a lot on original art. You can reframe a thrift store find to make it part of your curated collection.

An estate sale is a great way to find budget-friendly vintage furniture and art with personality.

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Swap Out Old Fixtures for New

Just because you're renting doesn't mean you have to put up with old light fixtures. Changing out a chandelier or pendant is much easier than you might imagine, and it makes a big impact. Check out thrift stores and big sales at lighting retailers for deals on sconces or outdoor lighting.

When you're ready to move, switch the old ones back and take your new light fixtures to the next place. If you're super handy around the house, you can even swap out plumbing fixtures—it's just a bit more involved and time-consuming, but it can be done.

Buy Budget-Friendly Accessories

Don't toss away your hard-earned paycheck on things like bedding, towels, area rugs and throw pillows. These are items that get a lot of wear and can be replaced regularly.

Accessories, in general, are also trendy in nature. As tastes and trends evolve, you're more inclined to exchange them for the latest colors and styles. And besides, updating your space with inexpensive accessories is a great way to refresh your home.

#5 - DECORATING HACKS FOR RENTAL PROPERTIES

Just because you're renting doesn't mean you need to settle for someone else's design style. We're sharing some clever and cheap tricks to create maximum design impact without breaking the rental rules. Here are our top decorating hacks for rental properties!

1. Update your lighting

If you're stuck with horrible fluorescents or outdated light fixtures, there is a super quick and cheap fix. Buy some floor and table lamps and strategically place them in your living areas and bedrooms. Or if it's bare bulbs, or removable lightshades, buy some cheap and pretty DIY light fixtures.

2. Change up the hardware

To instantly modernise a kitchen or bathroom, simply unscrew the handles on the cabinetry and replace with fancy new ones! Just don't forget to pop the old handles in

a labelled snap-lock bag and store in a safe place so you can replace them when you move on.

3. The more plants the better

Indoor plants instantly make any space feel more homely and beautiful. They're also great if you're in an apartment without a yard. Check out what plants are trending in interiors here or if you struggle to keep plants alive, our top 20 hard to kill indoor plants guide is a life saver!

4. Create your own storage

Custom cabinetry isn't really an option in a rental, but it's quick and easy to add your own storage with a cheap flatpack cube unit. You can style it with beautiful and practical baskets, and balance some art or trinkets on top to make it feel more like home.

5. Use rugs to hide and protect floors

Rental carpets tend to be very practical – read drab. You can instantly glam up a room by adding a beautiful large plush rug. If you invest in a good quality one, it will be able to move with you from home to home. The bonus is your rental carpet is also protected from spills and wear and tear, which you'll be grateful for when it's time to get your bond back! Check out our favourite places to shop for rugs here.

6. Buy beautiful bedding

Treat yourself to beautiful, luxurious bed linen to personalise your bedroom, add colour and texture, and make the space feel really special to you. Your bed makes up one of the largest surface areas in the bedroom so a new quilt will have a dramatic impact – it's one of our favourite decorating hacks for rental properties!

7. Hang curtains to hide ugly blinds and walls

To soften a room or hide an ugly blind, just hang some beautiful curtains! These might be thick textured blackout curtains, or beautiful sheer drapes. You can even get temporary blinds like these ones from IKEA. If you don't want to screw hooks into the wall, simply pick up a spring-loaded curtain rod from your local hardware store.

8. Use temporary wallpaper

There's a huge selection of temporary wallpaper and wall decals available online and it's relatively easy to install and remove when you're done. By just adding the wallpaper to one wall in a room you can create a beautiful point of interest and make it feel more like home!

9. Show off your art

With any luck, there will already be some appropriately placed nails or hooks on the wall that you can take advantage of. Invest in a beautiful piece of art that will work with a broad palette of colours so it can move with you. Here is our round up of the best places to buy artwork online.

If there are no hooks, use the removable command hooks, strips and tape to avoid putting holes in the walls. If there is no appropriate wall space, simply lean your artwork against the wall on top of your bookshelves and storage unit, or even on the floor if it's a large piece.

We've mentioned it before but it's worth saying again — art doesn't have to sit inside a frame. From abstract wall hangings to touch-activated wall lights, there are many out-of-the-box wall art options on the market now. In the case of those wall light panels, they also have the added benefit of adding ambient lighting to your space and many can be operated wirelessly from your phone!

10. Customise your kitchen splashback

If you hate your kitchen splashback, there are so many beautiful and temporary options, like these funky stickers from Etsy! When it's time to peel it off, it should come away relatively easily, and you can use a bit of eucalyptus oil to remove any sticky residue.

11. Decorate your furniture not your walls

If you're nervous about putting things on walls, there are still ways around it! Paint or wallpaper the back of a tall bookcase or storage unit, or if you want something you can easily update, cut out cardboard panels to shape and paint them or wrap them in fabric and secure them to the back of shelves. Otherwise, simply giving your tables, stools and chairs a fresh coat of paint can really brighten up a room. Here's a furniture upcycle Gina recently did for her son's nursery.

12. Create a temporary gallery wall

Use different coloured washi tape as alternative to wall frames – not only does it look great, but it can be easily peeled off without damaging the walls.

13. Invest in the perfect furniture

If you can't change the rooms, buy furniture that you really love to come home to. Try and pick pieces that are versatile and durable and will work in a variety of room shapes and sizes.

14. Use decorative ladders to create hanging space

A wall ladder not only looks great, it's a perfect way to add some colour to your walls without hooks or nails. See how Gina used a ladder in her living room to display magazines and a hanging pot plant here. And in the bathroom, it's perfect for extra towel hanging!

15. Accessorise, accessorise, accessorise

Use throws, cushions, trinkets and rugs to make the space reflect your style. They do no damage and can move with you from home to home. And with the affordable homewares range from places like Kmart, Big W and Target, there is something to suit any budget.

CONCLUSION

You would no doubt have been drawn to one or two of the unique interior design styles as you were reading through this guide. While colours, textures and furnishings will definitely have an impact on the end result of your home's interior design, many of the finishings and elements need to be decided upon at the time of building your home. Facades, fixtures and even floor plans all have a huge impact on the look and feel of the end result, so it's important to discuss these with your home builder.

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