

Home Hacks That Will Improve Your Life



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Abstract

In our fast-paced world, small changes can make a big difference in improving daily life. This article explores practical home hacks that enhance convenience, organization, and efficiency. From clever storage solutions and DIY cleaning tips to energy-saving tricks and time-saving kitchen hacks, these simple yet effective ideas can transform your living space. Whether you're looking to declutter, optimize household chores, or create a more comfortable environment, these home hacks will help streamline your routine and improve your overall quality of life.



1. Introduction

Our homes are our sanctuaries, but they can also become cluttered, disorganized, and inefficient without the right strategies. Simple yet smart home hacks can significantly improve daily life by making tasks easier, saving time, and enhancing comfort. Whether it's maximizing storage, using household items in creative ways, or adopting energy-efficient practices, these small changes can lead to big benefits. In this article, we will explore a variety of home hacks that will help you organize your space, simplify chores, and create a more functional and stress-free living environment.

2. Hacks To Get Your Home Ready for Guests

As party season approaches, it's time to prepare your home for planned gatherings, unexpected drop-ins, and the occasional overnight guest – sometimes at very late notice!

Beyond a good declutter and tidy-up, there are lots of ways to get your home guest-ready for the holiday season.

The ultimate goal is to create a space that looks – and feels – welcoming and comfortable. Organizing guest rooms and the kitchen in readiness for entertaining, adding creature comforts, and prepping favorite treats... getting organized for Christmas well ahead of guests arriving is the best idea, last-minute panic vibes don't give the best first impression! Familiarizing yourself with a pre-guest cleaning checklist should help keep these at bay, too.

How to get your home guest-ready for the holiday season



The run-up to Christmas is just as enjoyable as the day itself, so whether you're hosting family, planning parties with friends or inviting the neighbors, we'd recommend starting preparations early so you can enjoy it.

To help, we've compiled a checklist of how to get your home ready for the holiday season in Sydney, all of which can be done well in advance. A quick clean and tidy on the day they arrive, and you're guest-ready guaranteed.

1. Ensure a warm welcome by decluttering the entryway

As the first thing guests see when they arrive, the entryway is one of the best places to declutter before Christmas. As well as ensuring a festive first impression, practically you'll need the storage space.

Professional organizer Brenda Scott of Tidy My Space recommends you tackle the closet situation first, decluttering and adding extra hangers; 'doing this will ensure your guests feel at ease and appreciated – there's nothing less welcoming than seeing your jacket crammed into a space that's already overstuffed'.

Stylish woven baskets like these from Wayfair, fit in with any festive scheme and make great temporary drop zones for shoes, scarves, and hats, as well as gifts and goodies. Position them next to the front door so you've got your hands free for hugs and greetings.

2. Give your guest bedroom a cozy overhaul

If your guest room doubles as a catch-all for storage throughout the year, be sure to declutter any 'non-bedroom' related items ahead of your guests' arrival (especially anything techy) so it feels intentional and cozy.

'There's nothing worse than having to live out of a suitcase! I recommend organizing a closet so there's enough space for guests to unpack if they choose to do so. It can make a big difference to how comfortable they feel while away from home,' says professional organizer Meredith Goforth, founder of House of Prim.

After traveling, a comfy bed made up with fresh linens makes for a most welcome sight. Even if you're hosting guests without a guest room, simple touches like a pair of slippers and a bathrobe give a luxe-hotel feel, while a bottle of water, glass, and a spare phone charger on the bedside table are purely practical.

3. Pare back the bathroom

You want the bathroom to become a neutral space, so start by removing anything personal – toiletries and medications, as well as products from the shower and side of the bath; these can go into a temporary storage box for now. Line newly-empty shelves with open baskets, or use drawer organizers such as these collapsible fabric versions from Target, so everyone has their own designated space.

Before guests arrive, switch in clean hand towels (leave clean bath towels neatly stacked on the bed so there's no confusion), spare toilet rolls, and luxury hand soap. Try hiding a scented reed diffuser either above or below a cabinet; a seasonal fragrance makes for a lovely finishing touch.

Don't forget to keep on top of the downstairs cloakroom throughout the holiday season, too. 'I like to leave a pack of anti-bac wipes in a drawer close by so I can give it an extra clean before friends drop in,' adds Millie Hurst, Solved section editor at Homes & Gardens.

4. Organize the kitchen

From festive tipples and warming dishes to big breakfast buffets, cooking for more people than normal can quickly lead to chaos if you've not prepared for it in advance.

Take stock of any items you may be missing or need more of, whether that's cooking equipment, serveware, or even chairs and tables, so you can rent or borrow it in advance of guests arriving. Organize your kitchen cabinets so essentials are at the fore, saving you rummaging around for what you need.

'You may be hosting, but the pressure of serving festive feasts doesn't need to fall solely on your shoulders – having your loved ones stay is a fantastic opportunity to pitch in together. Ask them to bring a dish with them or to get stuck in with washing up or wiping down surfaces at the end of the meal,' says Jennifer Ebert, digital editor, Homes & Gardens.

5. Stock up on tasty treats...



Take the opportunity to declutter your pantry and stock up on non-perishable items such as crackers, chutneys, and nuts, so you've always got nibbles at the ready – you never know when guests might drop by unannounced.

'I like to designate a separate storage in the pantry for my long-stay guests, filled with all of their favorite foods or dietary requirements. That way they can help themselves without feeling guilty about looking through cupboards!', says professional organizer Andrea Gagliano, founder of Ace of Space Organization.

6. ... and set up a drinks station

Take the pressure off yourself by creating a space where guests can help themselves to refreshments. A few spirits, ice at the ready, sparkling water and some sliced fruit for garnish. If you don't have a bar cart, designate a section of the countertop or kitchen island, or if you'd rather keep guests out of the kitchen, repurpose a storage unit in the living room or dining room.

If you've got guests staying for a few days, you could do a similar thing with tea and coffee. Organize kitchen countertops so you've got the kettle and coffee machine grouped together, along with canisters of tea bags, coffee pods, sugar and biscuits.

7. Take stock of bed linen and towels – and sort a laundry schedule

If you haven't had people to stay in a while, look through your linen cupboard and make sure your guest linens and towels are still in tip top condition. If they're not, invest in a new set. Be sure to wash it a few times so it becomes super soft.

'If you have guests staying for longer than a few nights, it's worth popping a laundry basket in the room to corral used towels, clothing, and linens. This helps keep the room neat and tidy and makes it easier for you to whizz around with the vacuum cleaner, too. When doing laundry for overnight guests, be sure to ask them about their product preferences and ensure they don't have any allergies,' says Millie Hurst.

3. Hacks That Will Save You Time In The Kitchen



Even though my blog isn't food-focused, I've certainly shared a lot of kitchen tips over the years! I love finding and sharing information that helps make daily life easier. And for many of us, our daily lives involve quite a bit of time spent in the kitchen! And in my experience, having a tip or trick up my sleeve that can save me a little bit of time or effort in the kitchen can be hugely rewarding. I've posted many of my favorite time-saving kitchen tips here on my blog, including how to shred chicken in seconds, how to soften butter quickly, and how to craft the perfect cinnamon roll.

No matter whether you're crafting a gourmet meal, or just trying to get dinner on the table, we could all use a little help in the kitchen! And I think I've got just the post to help. :-) Today I'll be sharing 13 quick and easy cleaning hacks that are sure to save you time in the kitchen! From saving salty soups to wrapping up leftovers, these tips will help you save time and energy (and maybe most importantly, stress!) on many different cooking and baking tasks!

1. Save Salty Soups

Ever been a bit too heavy-handed with your seasonings when making soup? Salt can make the difference between a bland soup and a delicious one, but too much salt can be very unpleasant! To rescue a salty soup, drop a peeled potato into the pot. The potato will help absorb some of the excess salt and save your soup!

2. Rescue Rice

Rice can be tricky to get right at the best of times! And if you happen to overcook it, the rice at the bottom of the pot can burn and affect the taste of the rest of the rice. But there's an easy way to salvage your rice! Just placed a slice of white bread on top of the rice for 5-10 minutes. The bread will draw out the burned flavor and aroma, leaving you with plenty of palatable rice to serve! (Just be careful not to scrape up any of the burned bits off the bottom of the pot when you go to scoop the rice.)

3. Pop More Popcorn

I love homemade popcorn, but I used to get so frustrated by how many kernels remained unpopped after making it! But then I learned a simple tip that really helped. All you have to do is soak your popcorn kernels in water for about 10 minutes before popping. The additional moisture from the water creates more steam inside each kernel during cooking, resulting in fewer unpopped kernels!

4. Prevent Potato Sprouts

Can't seem to keep your potatoes from sprouting in storage? Just drop an apple in the bag or basket where you keep the potatoes! The apple will help prevent premature sprouting.

5. Faster Defrosting

You can defrost meat quickly by pouring white vinegar over the surface of the meat. The vinegar will lower the freezing temperature of the meat, causing it to thaw faster. And as an added bonus, the vinegar will also help tenderize the meat too!

6. Fish Out Fat

Here's a great tip for getting rid of excess fat and oil from sauces, stocks, stews, and soups. Wrap a few ice cubes in a paper towel, then skim them across the top of your soup. The ice cubes will encourage excess fat to solidify, making it much easier to scoop out and discard!

7. Thicken Runny Sauces



Struggling with a runny sauce? Toss a dry lasagna noodle into the sauce. The noodle will absorb the excess liquid without changing the taste or texture of your sauce. Once the sauce has reached your desired consistency, just pull the noodle out and discard it.

8. Ice-Free Ice Cream

Having an icy crust form on the surface of your ice cream can make it unpleasant to eat. But it's easy to prevent that icy layer from forming in the first place! When you're ready to put your ice cream away, press a piece of wax paper into the surface of the ice cream before replacing the lid. This will help keep your ice cream ice-free!

9. Keep Cake From Sticking

Use a damp towel to ensure your freshly baked cake doesn't stick to the pan. After taking the pan out of the oven, set it on the damp towel to cool for a few minutes. Then turn the

pan out onto a plate, and the cake should slide right out! This works for ceramic and metal baking dishes only – not for glass!

4. Best Ever Cleaning Hacks



'There should be no drudgery in the house' - that was Good Housekeeping's stated mission nearly 100 years ago and we still believe that to be true today!

Every year, the GHI experts test countless cleaning products and gadgets, sorting the brilliant tips from the internet myths to help you get the housework done quicker!

Here's the latest round-up of some of our favourite cleaning hacks to save you time and effort.

Let's start with the basics

Disinfect the cloths and sponges you use every day to keep them germ free. Clean them first in hot soapy water, wring them out, then soak in a disinfectant such as Milton Sterilising Fluid for 15 minutes (or soak in freshly boiled water). Wring out again and allow to dry thoroughly. Some cloths and sponges can be machine washed but you'll need to be able to use a hot cycle to disinfect them properly (check the care instructions for the maximum temperature they can be washed at).

Pep up the power

Here's what to do if your vacuum cleaner has lost its suction: undo the hose and check the entrance to the dust cylinder or dust bag for blocked debris, replace the bag/filters or wash the dirt container (and filters, if washable) and dry thoroughly. Cut hairs and threads from the brush head (never pull), taking care not to damage the bristles. Tease out blockages in the tube, then it's ready to go!

For chemical-free oven cleaning

For a deep clean, pre-heat your oven to 200 degree C, fill an oven-safe bowl with water, place inside with the door closed and leave for 45 minutes. Allow your oven to cool and wipe away the loosened dirt with a clean cloth.

Shelves can be cleaned by dissolving 250g of soda crystals in hot water, soaking the shelves and scrubbing them with a kitchen foil ball.

Get a top mop!

For great results, we rate the Spontex Full Action System Spin Mop and Bucket (88/100; £35, Amazon) comes with a bucket that has a built-in spin system designed to wring out water more efficiently.

TOP TIP: Use warm water to mop hard floors, as it loosens grime more effectively than cold water, but note that very hot or boiling water can damage flooring.

Remove finger marks from stainless steel

Whether it's the sink, a splashback or the kettle, finger marks are annoying and don't always disappear with a wipe. Put a dab of baby oil or rinse aid on a clean cloth and rub the whole surface to see them vanish.

How to tackle murky vases

For cloudy glass, try swishing round a handful of uncooked rice in warm water – this will scour the grime off. Then pop a dishwasher table or biological detergent in the vase and fill with hot water. Leave overnight to work its magic. Rinse and shine!

The beauty of bicarb

Bicarbonate of soda is a cleaning superstar, thanks to its gentle abrasive nature and the fact it's a great natural deodoriser. Use it to:

Get tannin stains off teaspoons and the inside of cups by rubbing with a paste made up of bicarb and a little water. Rinse thoroughly.

Absorb food odours by keeping a ramekin with powder bicarb on top of the salad drawer to keep the fridge fresh.

Clean countertops, stainless steel sinks, microwaves, and cooking utensils. Simply mix into a paste with a little water and scrub.

Deodorise carpets, upholstered furniture and even pet beds. Sprinkle it on, leave for 15 mins and then vacuum up thoroughly.

If the odour in your gym clothes won't budge, try soaking the offending garment for thirty minutes in a sink filled with cool water and five to six tbs of bicarbonate of soda. Wash again, and dry naturally.

To bring back the shine to sterling silver, make up a paste (three parts bicarb to one part water) and apply with a lint-free cloth (not a paper towel, which can scratch), then rinse.

Focus on dust traps



Use your vacuum cleaner's crevice attachment or a telescopic long-handled duster to clean into that annoying inch between your fridge and the countertop. Dislodge dust from the abyss inside radiators using the flexible Microfibre Radiator Brush, then vacuum it up.

For a gleaming fridge

Don't forget you can put the shelves and salad drawers in the dishwasher to get them really clean. Use a toothpick to remove food residue that has collected in the join between the surface of the shelf and the surround. And make sure the drainage hole at the back is gunk-free using a cotton bud.

Lining the salad drawers with kitchen towel will also make it easier to remove veggie debris in between cleans.

We have the technology

Shared tech such as the TV remote, computer keyboards and games console controllers can be microbe-magnets. Use a damp microfibre cloth to clear grime and dust, then a clean cloth spritzed with a disinfectant solution to tackle germs and viruses.

For those hard-to-reach spaces on your keyboard, turn the whole thing upside down and tap gently. Tease out stubborn dirt with a sticky note folded in two (sticky side out). Always wash your hands regularly if you are sharing the workstation.

4.1. The Art Of Dusting: Tips And Tricks



Dusting is crucial that needs to be carried out to ensure your home in Sydney isn't buried under layers of grime and looking like a Halloween funhouse. However, dusting isn't just a task; it's an art that, if done correctly, can help transform your home into a space that radiates comfort and cleanliness.

While dusting itself may seem like an easy enough task, most of us rush through it or skip essential areas altogether. Over time, this won't just dull the appeal of your home; it will end up affecting your mood and your health. A thorough dusting will ensure that you have a clean, allergen free home environment to dwell in.

In this article, we will explore how to dust your home properly, sharing expert tips that will make the process both efficient and rewarding. Which tools to use? Which spots to tackle first? Can I prevent dust allergies? By the end of the article, you'll be able to answer all such questions with ease. Whether you're preparing for a casual weekend clean-up or a more detailed end of lease cleaning in Sydney, these tips will help you reach the standards visualised for your home.

1. Understanding Dust: The Invisible Intruder

Dust isn't just dirt; it consists of a combination of particles that includes dead skin cells, pet dander, dust mites and their droppings, fabric fibres and even microscopic fragments of pollen or soil. These uninvited guests settle on all visible surfaces like shelves or countertops, hidden corners or underneath the sofa. Understanding the nature of dust will help you combat it more effectively. A lesser-known fact about dust is that they contain an electrostatic charge, which is what makes them cling so stubbornly to certain kinds of surfaces making tasks like budget end of lease cleaners Sydney tough to handle.

2. The Tools to Use for the Job

Having the correct tools to carry out dusting can make a significant difference in the dust levels inside your humble abode. Here are some essentials you can consider investing in:

Microfiber Cloths: These specialised cloths are expertly designed to capture/trap dust particles rather than simply moving them around.

Feather Duster: This may seem counterintuitive, but they are especially useful for cleaning fragile items and those hard-to-reach places. The trick is to clean the surrounding area after you have used it. So, do this first, then clean the rest of the house.

Vacuum Cleaners with Attachments: These are ideal for clearing upholstery and corners. Modern vacuums nowadays also come with specialised dusting brushes.

Dusting Sprays: These help in reducing static making it harder for dust particles to resettle on surfaces. When buying, look for eco-friendly options to make sure you're not exposing your home in Sydney to anything potentially toxic.

If you are planning to hand over your property after end of lease cleaning in Sydney, landlords expect you to make sure the house is spick and span, and these tools will help you achieve just that.

3. Techniques: How to Dust Like a Pro

Now that you are equipped with the right set of tools let's get down and dirty! Here is what you can do:

Work from Top to Bottom: Always start from the highest points in the room, plainly speaking, the ceiling fan, high shelves, etc. and work your way down from them. This will ensure that you capture the fallen dust as you progress.

Use Circular Motions: Move your duster or microfiber cloth in circular motions to effectively capture all the particles. Moving in straight lines often ends up redistributing some of the dust.

Don't Forget the Walls and Skirting Boards: These areas get overlooked mostly and accumulate a lot of dust overtime. So be sure to put them in your cleaning checklist.

Damp Dusting: For stubborn or sticky dust, slightly dampen your microfiber cloth. This will make the removal process easier, especially on kitchen surfaces.

Be mindful of the Vacuum Setting: If you're vacuuming and dusting parallelly, make sure to adjust the settings as needed for hardwood, carpets and upholstery.

4. Identifying the Hidden Dust Havens



Dust hides in plain sight. Items like lampshades, blinds, and the tops of picture frames can accumulate more dust than you realise. Utilise feather dusters or vacuum with a brush attachment to deal with these areas. Similarly electronics like the TVs and computers attract dust due to the static charge in them. Use anti-static sprays or dedicated electronic dusting cloths to keep these devices clean.

5. How to Keep Dust Away

As the saying goes, prevention is better than any cure; controlling the amount of dust in your home in Sydney can easily make a lot of difference. You can:

Control Humidity Levels: Dust thrives in dry air, so using a humidifier to maintain indoor humidity levels (at about 30-50%) can work wonders.

Declutter: Fewer knick-knacks on display means less surface area for dust to settle on.

Wash fabrics regularly: Curtains, cushion covers and bedding should be washed frequently using gentle cleaning products to eliminate the embedded dust in them.

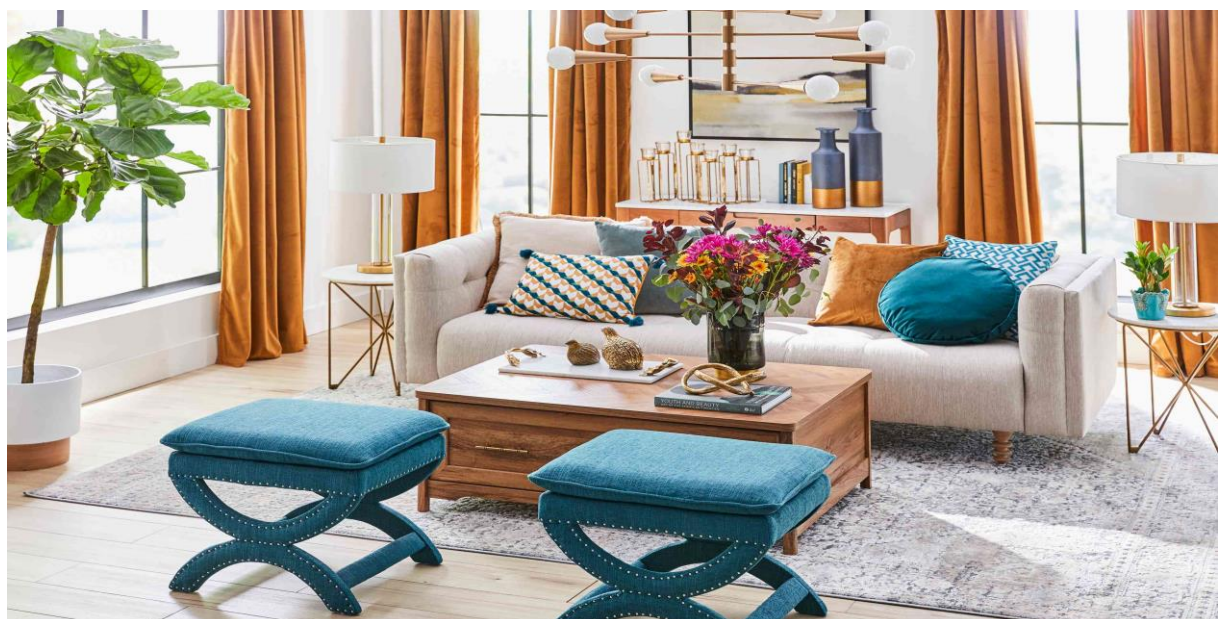
Use Door Mats: Placing mats in entryways can reduce the amount of dust brought in.

These steps are crucial if you're preparing for end of lease cleaning in Sydney, as property managers tend to inspect the home very closely during this.

6. Dusting and Its Emotional Reward

Dusting may not be anyone's favourite pastime, but the results from a good cleaning can be satisfying. A dust-free home doesn't just look better; it also aids in improving indoor air quality, benefitting the health of its inhabitants. Moreover, the very act of dusting can be therapeutic to some. It offers a sense of accomplishment, helping you feel more in control of your environment.

5. Decorating hacks for every room of your home



What do you think of when you hear the word 'redecorating'? Maybe it's a full renovation, a knees-deep project that involves dust, dirt and DIY – in other words, something that requires time, money and a lot of effort. But, despite what you might think, redoing your space need not involve any of that (phew!). The simplest ideas can be the most effective – whether it's saying goodbye to old prints and hello to new, or rolling down a new rug, you can change the look and feel of a room in minutes and we've got the tips on how to do it. So if this sounds like your kind of redo, cast your eyes this way...

Handy hacks for the living room

Just add art

If you've got some prints up already, why not switch them up? There's a never-ending range of affordable options to choose from. Or if you're feeling crafty, you could try creating your own masterpiece. From an abstract piece to a minimalist and modern creation, grab a canvas and see where the mood takes you.

• Roll out a rug

Got a large, open expanse of floor space? Or working with a square footage that's a bit smaller? Either way, a rug can make your room feel extra cosy, give the floors a lift and help inject some colour and texture – all with minimal expense and time. It can even help zone your area. Rugs really are the gifts that keep on giving.

Rearrange the room

Here's an idea that doesn't cost a thing, just your muscle power and enough motivation to move your furniture. Believe us when we say it's absolutely possible to make your room feel new and exciting by shifting your current furniture around and restyling shelves. Doing so can help maximise the space and improve the flow.

Handy hacks for the kitchen



- **Paint effects**

Hit refresh on the hub of your home with a lick of paint on your walls. Kitchens are busy places. And with food splatters, oil stains and general wear and tear to compete with, they can quickly become dated. But it's possible to lift your four walls and on a budget.

- **Happy handles**

We've said it before and we'll say it again: kitchen handles can switch up the whole look and feel of your cookspace. Want to create an industrial vibe? Opt for matt black. Prefer something more in keeping with the countryside? Choose some antique brass options for the win. Or, for a more eco-friendly fix, consider spray-painting your existing handles.

Take on textiles

Instead of getting messy or mucky with paint, give your kitchen a revamp with textiles. Think tablecloths and tea towels you can display on your oven and matching oven mitts you can hang. It might sound simple (because it is) but these additions can make a welcome impact – and quickly.

Handy hacks for the home office

Plant power

A happy workspace = a happy worker. And if there's one office addition that's bound to improve your mood (and the mood of the room), it's adding a plant or two. But we're not adding extra work to your plate. If you struggle to keep indoor foliage alive, topping the list of houseplants that are easy to look after are succulents, aloe vera and a snake plant. Take your pick...

- **Work of art**

After a room with a view? Instead of renovating or redecorating, show your walls some love by putting up your favourite prints, posters or photos of all the good times. You could even make a gallery wall of your own qualifications, certificates or achievements if that's your vibe. Or place your #goals front and centre to inject some inspo into your 9 to 5.

- **Storage space**

It's no secret that a cluttered workspace can have a negative impact on productivity. So boost your brain power and help keep things clutter free by investing in some storage for all your office needs. Whether it's a cupboard, under-the-desk drawers or shelves, tidying your space and restoring some order will make your office/work area feel as good as new.

Handy hacks for the bedroom

- **Boost your bedding**

Let's face it, nothing beats the feel of a clean and freshly made bed, so go one step further and breathe life back into your bedroom by investing in a new set of sheets. Whether you choose a printed pattern, a bold colour or stick to a fresh white set, redecorating your sleep space has never been so easy. Now to make the bed...

- **Style your side table**



You might not even have to head out to the shops (or venture into cyberspace) to tick off this decorating idea. Have a search around your home in Sydney for items you can style your bedside table with. Arrange a stack of unread books, add a spare candle and finish off with a lamp that needs a new resting place.

- **Cover in cushions**

If you're after a boudoir update that will take just minutes, look no further. Give your bedspread a much-needed revival by arranging some cushions on top. Yes, you will have to wrestle them off the bed each time you want to sleep but just think how pretty they'll look.

Conclusion

Incorporating simple home hacks into your daily routine can make a significant difference in enhancing efficiency, organization, and overall comfort. From clever storage solutions to time-saving cleaning tips, these small changes can help create a more functional and stress-free living space. By implementing these practical ideas, you can streamline household tasks, reduce clutter, and improve your quality of life. Start applying these hacks today and experience the convenience of a well-organized and efficient home!

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