

Timeless Décor Tips

Decorating or redecorating a home is the perfect opportunity to show your creativity. It can also be a challenge. Deciding on the right colors, style and inspiration can be overwhelming, especially if there is a deadline. Find your decorating bliss with the following tips that work for every home, for every style.

Make your décor livable

A fresh start for your home does not mean you have to reinvent yourself through décor. Certain pieces or palettes may look great on television or in magazines, but that does not mean they will work in your home. If your household includes children or pets, avoid large sculptural pieces, glass tables, and chairs with skirts. Everyday life can be demanding and trying to maintain any room as a no-go zone is unnecessary. If you are deciding on the color for a new sofa, consider checking the upholstery for stains to see which color would work best in your house/family.

Consider a mix of high and low, old and new

If the budget is tight, select statement pieces. Think sofas, tables, mirrors or lighting. Then spend wisely on throw pillows, decorative throws, poufs, vases or frames. Quality pieces will make inexpensive accents look luxurious. The bathroom is where quality matters arguably more than any other room given its size. Buy the highest quality towels to dress up towel racks or a vanity. Mason jars can be charming holders for toothbrushes or cotton balls. Invest in what makes your home feel welcoming and distinctly yours. Not everything has to be new. Mixing in a few vintage pieces or family treasures/heirlooms will make any space unique. If there is a passed down midcentury typewriter, consider giving it a place of honor on a mantle or coffee table. A beloved family album can be digitized for a gallery wall and a childhood blanket can be repurposed into a tapestry.

Get inspired

Defining your interior style is not always easy. When presented with the task of decorating, some homeowners may draw a blank. Not knowing where to start is sometimes the greatest opportunity. You don't have to leave home to get inspired. Go to your closet and see which colors dominate. Look out your windows to study the view. A home in the mountains may do well with farmhouse or rustic themes. Desert homeowners should consider Southwestern touches, such as cacti or faux skulls. Lush gardens can be paired with pinks, blues or whites. Check out which colors stand out or use natural elements such as wood, sand or concrete to act as a backdrop. Pour over magazines or watch a television show on home makeovers. Think of/Recall which of your friends' homes have elements/spaces/accents that make them inviting.

Play with color

Color brings excitement to any space. Bolder is almost always better when it comes to magnificent hues. Make a statement with an accent wall or accessories. The key to successfully using color or pairings of strong hues is balance. An abundance of cool shades can make a space cold, while too many warm hues will make it feel confining. Blue and green are neighbors on the color wheel, making them ideal matches. Every shade, from pastels to jewel tones, must work together. Luxurious gold works well with versatile green. Think gold lighting in an apple green living room. Go retro with a pink bathroom or

modern with a millennial pink sofa in the living room. Orange accents also make a statement. Consider an orange/citrus-inspired front door or pergola.

Consider professional input

A designer tells your visual story. They have access to resources that are not readily available to the public, including connections to vendors. This can save hours of research and overpaying for goods. Designers will listen to your ideas and incorporate them into the overall story/picture of your home, creating a unified look. Ask family and friends for referrals. Interview at least two candidates and ask them to bring ideas. This can be done in your home or a public place. They should be somewhat known in the business and have several recommendations. Set the budget upfront and explore/discuss their ideas to stay within the restrictions. Show a few pictures that inspire you, colors you are fascinated by and fabrics you love to touch. If a professional designer is financially out of reach, consider hiring an interior design student. They may take on the job for school credit. However, you will be getting what you pay for with this option. To save money, a professional interior designer may work on only one room in your house or a portion of it.

Have a plan

Decorating a home requires a plan. The budget should be discussed and every member of the family should have some input or consideration. After finding your design inspiration, break down the different components of your desired look. This will include flooring, furniture, paint colors and accessories. Do all your research or hire a designer before beginning. If going the DIY route, factor in a few visits from a handyman. Be honest about how much you have to spend without putting down a credit card. Factor in time delays by a little as a month and as much as a year for a full-house renovation. Contractors may fall behind just as **DIYers** may not be able to finish every weekend project.

Do one room at a time

To keep to a strict schedule, consider decorating only one room at a time. This approach leaves room for change and provides a buffer if a major car repair or storm damage/weather event requires a redirection of funds. It also allows you to really enjoy the process of decorating. Start with the room that needs the most attention or has the most pressing need. If a major holiday is on the horizon, make the dining room and living room top priorities so they will be done in time.

Celebrate when done

Throw a party where your newly decorated home is the guest of honor. Wait at least a week or two before setting the date. This allows you to enjoy your new home without worrying about spills or high traffic. Decide if your party will have set hours or an open house-inspired flow. If the kitchen or dining room is newly revamped, consider hosting a buffet. More often than not, the living room or patio will be the main gathering spot. Start or end tours of your newly decorated home there.

Proving great décor/style is timeless, these tips were inspired by the April 1958 edition of Better Homes & Gardens magazine.

