

TOP TIPS to reinvigorate your home

Has the economy brought your redecorating plans to a screeching halt? If so, don't fret as all is not lost. Here, Doireann Barrett presents her top "R-Tips" to distract you from the doom and gloom and transform your home during this recession.

In the current economic climate, plans to redecorate our homes have mostly been put on the back burner. Just the thought of redecorating sounds crazy! In reality, as long as you plan wisely, revamping your home doesn't have to cost a lot.

Remove

There is no time like the present for a spring clean. Change the impression of a room by taking out that extra piece of furniture that has been sitting there for years with no purpose.

Now is the perfect time to go through your closets, shelves, garages and cabinets for "stuff" that is beginning to own you, rather than the other way around.

Using some coloured Post-It notes, designate an area for your "absolutely must keep" pieces. Use another colour Post-It to mark those items that you use occasionally and will consider getting rid of.

The third group is where the fun begins, the "donate or sell" items. You don't have to mark these; just start a pile or throw them into a large box. Old clothes, CDs or

cassettes that you no longer listen to, appliances, sporting goods, bedding... anything! Be ruthless.

Now, go back to pile number two and take out at least 25 per cent of those items and add them to pile number three.

Repaint

It is amazing what a coat of paint can do for a boring table or chair. Country Cream or French Cream is all the rage at the moment in furniture stores, so why not try to update your existing furniture pieces yourself? Repaint that old pine coffee table or headboard for a more modern look.

Repainting your interior walls is a relatively low cost solution to updating your interior look, especially if you paint them yourself. There's no need to go overboard with bright colours to achieve impact, thoughtful use of complimentary colour tones can result in a room that feels completely new, without changing your existing furnishings.

Country Creams and Orchid White are current favourites that instantly change the style of your kitchen, while also creating a bright and fresh room.

Always remember to have a theme before you start decorating your home – it may be a favourite colour scheme or even a design theme that you found in a magazine. When you see something you like in a magazine, cut it out and attach it to a mood board to create the style you would like to achieve, making notes as you go along. Compile a list of what is needed to create this style.

Rearrange

Don't be afraid to move furniture from one room to another to give it new life. It's amazing how easy it is to learn how to optimize space removing everything from a room so you can begin with a blank canvas.

Why not change the seating arrangements to open up a room or to make it cosier?

Reuse

Reuse what you already have – there are so many items around the home that can be 'recycled'. You may already have the items suited for that chosen style hidden away or they may simply be being used in the wrong environment.

Visit second-hand book stores for vintage magazine covers. These can be framed to create a wall of fashion vintage elegance for that creative and stylish look.

Reuse fabric from sheets, quilts and even old clothes to make cushions and curtain tie backs. A fresh group of cushions or a throw over can freshen up an old sofa instantly!

Reupholster

New upholstery can completely update a seating arrangement. First and foremost, always price the job completely as sometimes it can cost more than a new sofa suite! Remember to price the amount of fabric needed and how much the reupholsterer will charge to recover the suite and always shop around!

A great couch is the centrepiece of your living room. Make it classic

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and make it comfortable. Your couch can be updated as interior design trends change. Reupholster an old headboard to change your bedroom dramatically.

Replace

Adding new drawer handles to a well-worn bedside table can completely change the overall impression of the locker. Why not update your kitchen presses by doing the same?

Replacing lampshades will give your lamp or light fitting an instant facelift. There are loads of home décor stores selling very stylish lampshades at very affordable prices.

Remember to keep busy patterns at bay, go for plain duvet sets and accessorize your bedroom with cushions and throws; you never know, they may already be lying around the house. Ready-made curtains can also be purchased at very affordable

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prices and they can transform any room in an instant!

It's all about keeping an eye out for the bargains and being smart with what you are spending your money on, so as well as shopping in department stores, it's worth checking out charity shops and 'euro-saver' stores as they also offer ranges of fashionable, yet affordable, accessories.

Retiling & Re-carpeting

If it's retiling and re-carpeting that you need to spruce up your home, there are fantastic deals nationwide at the moment and now is the time

to hire tradesmen at cost effective prices! But as with shopping, remember to always price around for the best deal.

Redecorate & Revive

The most important lesson is that, just as our bodies and our minds are temples, so are our homes. It should be a place of tranquility, peace and serenity, our retreat from the daily grind and pressures of life. However, before undergoing any redecorating transformation, you must put your mind in a peaceful state first!



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