



How To Make Your Home Look Better

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Abstract

Transforming your home into a more inviting, stylish, and functional space doesn't require a complete overhaul. Simple changes such as decluttering, incorporating natural elements, rearranging furniture, and updating lighting can significantly enhance your home's aesthetic. Personalizing your space with decor that reflects your taste and adding fresh colors or textures can elevate the ambiance. This guide offers practical and affordable tips for homeowners to create a beautiful, harmonious living environment that improves comfort and leaves a lasting impression on guests. Whether you're redesigning or making minor adjustments, these ideas will inspire you to revitalize your home effortlessly.



1. Introduction

Your home is more than just a place to live; it's a reflection of your personality, style, and comfort. Creating an appealing and functional living space doesn't always require expensive renovations or professional interior designers. With a little creativity and attention to detail, you can transform any room into a visually pleasing and comfortable sanctuary. Whether you're looking to modernize your decor, maximize functionality, or simply refresh your space, this guide will provide you with actionable steps to elevate your home's appearance. From small DIY updates to strategic design changes, let's explore how you can make your home look better while staying true to your unique preferences.

2. Decorate With Plants

Whether you're a longtime plant parent or just beginning to build a collection of green friends, you know by now that plants, including great fake plants, deserve a prime place in

your home. How can you decorate with them and add a little extra personality to your space? We've got you covered with the 27 styling tips below.



Just note that no matter your experience with plants, you should still be confident when it comes to including them in your house or apartment in Sydney.

"Plants can add so much character to a room. They liven up a space and there are so many different varieties of plants. The possibilities are endless," notes Instagrammer Andreina Fuenteabla, who owns 65 plants. "An important factor to remember when owning plants is that it's trial and error. If you are just starting your plant journey just know that you'll kill some plants along the way, and that's okay! Just keep going and learning. You're doing great."

Have Fun With Vines

Shape your vines so that they wrap around a mirror. This will help keep dangling leaves off the floor and add some pep to your front hall. Who says decorating with greenery is only for the holiday season?

Transform a Bar Cart

Not in the mood for cocktails? Take an empty bar cart and use it as a plant stand. Wheels make it easy to move green friends throughout the house as needed. If plants are showing signs of too much sun, simply roll the cart away from the window.

Try Terracotta

"When it comes to styling with plants, I always tell people to have fun with it, be creative, and try new things," Fuentealba says. "Make sure you understand what your plant needs to thrive, and listen to the signs your plant is giving you. Play with planters: hang some, mount some. I'm personally a huge terracotta lover, so I'm always on the hunt for terracotta pots that have different textures and designs."

Deck the Loo

Plants aren't just for our main living spaces. Make your nightly bubble bath feel even more zen by bringing some plants into the loo. You'll recreate the feel of your favorite tropical spa-like getaway without having to go very far.

Style a Hutch

Transform a hutch into a sophisticated plant storage system by filling the shelves with various sizes of pots. Don't be afraid to stack some on top if your collection begins to overflow a little.

"I like to disperse my plants around my home, so I can see them in every corner, but you can also group them together on a shelf or cabinet," Fuentealba comments. "If you are feeling stuck with where to start, there is so much inspiration all around, especially with Instagram. Just start with a few plants and go from there. It'll take time to grow your collection; enjoy the journey."

Make Over Your TV Stand

Instagrammer Agatha Isabel of @plant.ma is all for doing double duty in her apartment. "I have a trailing and climbing wall full of Philodendron, Scindapsus, and Monstera on my TV stand," she explains. "I have a concrete wall where the plants love to attach to the porous surface, and I even use command light hooks to help those trailing plants climb their way up. There's also a grow light right above the space to help train the plants to climb and reach upwards."

Try a Tall Tree

Once again, don't be shy about bringing plants into the bathroom if you have the space and ample lighting. A thriving fiddle leaf fig adds major visual interest by the sink.

And if your loo doesn't have windows, Isabel offers another suggestion. "I've turned my windowless bathroom into a propagation and isolation area for my new plants," she explains. "I recommend isolating new plants when you first receive them in order to make

sure you're not bringing any plants pests in your area. Simply turn your bathroom into a prop room with the help of a grow light."

Add Cheer to Your Home Office



Add some plant life to your home workspace to make long days in front of the computer screen feel a little less blah. While keeping your desktop relatively clear is important, plants can still live on the ground or hang from the ceiling.

Forget the Headboard

Who needs a formal headboard when you can have a wall of plants above your bed instead? Fall asleep dreaming of the outdoors with an intricate display like this one.

Pretty Up Your Patio

Take your patio to the next level with an assortment of larger plants that eliminate the need for further decoration. In this space, fiddle leaf figs and Monstera plants reign supreme.

Try This Finishing Touch

Not sure how to fill that open shelf? Go ahead and add a plant. Just make sure to rotate the pot somewhat often to ensure that your green friend receives ample sunlight on all sides.

Look Up High

No green room is complete without a plant (or several). Hang a shelf above your windows to take advantage of vertical space and allow long vines to hang down without disrupting anyone.

Thinking high up can also be a smart solution for those with pets, Isabel explains. "I have some fur babies that like to run around and tend to knock over plants every once in a while," she comments. "As a result, I've began placing my larger plants on the top shelves to maximize floor space. Coincidentally, they also provide the feel of a jungle canopy."

3. DIY Home Decorating Tips



Decorating like a designer doesn't have to be hard. There are many tips and tricks you can follow to help you transform your home. We've consulted several designers who shared their simple home decor ideas to breathe new life into your space. In this article, we'll provide home decorating tips to freshen up the rooms in your home without breaking your budget.

Home Decorating Tips for the DIYer in You

1. Set the Tone at the Front Door

If you want your house to make a great first impression in Sydney, paint the front door a fun, glossy hue. "Red is a lucky color in many cultures," says Lara Allen-Brett, a New Jersey-based stager. A red door meant "welcome" to weary travelers in early America, and on churches it represents a safe haven.

Two other hues gaining favor are orange and yellow, according to San Francisco-based stager Christopher Breining. Both colors are associated with joy and warmth.

One thing that should go is an outdated screen door. Get rid of it or replace it with a storm door with full-length glass that you can switch out for a screened panel.

2. Paint Walls in Light and Neutral Colors

Painting a room a different color can create a dramatic change in your space. Stick to colors like beige or gray, especially on the first floor, where flow is important. “You want to minimize jarring transitions,” says Breining. Neutral walls give you the greatest decorating flexibility, allowing you to easily switch up your accessories.

And if you have two small rooms next to each other, painting them the same neutral color helps them feel larger. Look at a paint strip and move up or down a shade or two for a subtle variation from room to room, suggests Allen-Brett.

Changing paint colors is an inexpensive way to update a room. Match your new color to the surrounding decor so you don’t feel compelled to purchase new accessories, or consider painting an accent wall to create some contrast.

3. Make Sure Your Sofa “Talks” to Your Chairs

Your living space is often where people congregate, drawing family and friends together. To create a warm and welcoming environment, consider arranging your furniture in a way that invites connection.

“A conversation area that has a U-shape, with a sofa and two chairs facing each other at each end of the coffee table, or an H-shape, with a sofa directly across from two chairs and a coffee table in the middle, is ideal,” says Michelle Lynne, a Dallas-based stager.

One common mistake to avoid is pushing all the furniture against the walls. “People do that because they think it will make their room look bigger, but in reality, floating the furniture away from the walls makes the room feel larger,” she says.

4. Let the Sun Shine

“When it comes to heavy, outdated drapes, a naked bank of windows is better than an ugly one,” says Lynne. Ideally, window dressings should be functional and elegant—think sheers paired with full-length panels.

If your room gets a lot of sun, opt for light colors that won’t fade. The most recommended lightweight fabrics for panels are cotton, linen, and silk blends because they tend to hang well.

For homeowners looking to decorate without breaking the bank, new window treatments help dress up a room at a relatively low cost. Opt for curtains, roller shades, or vertical blinds to keep costs down. Or, as mentioned above, you can also strip your windows and leave them bare for natural light to stream in.

5. Hang at Least One Mirror in Every Room

“Mirrors can make a space feel brighter because they bounce the light around the room,” says Breining. But placing one in the wrong spot can be almost as bad as not having one at all.

Put mirrors on walls perpendicular to windows, not directly across from them. Hanging a mirror directly opposite a window can actually bounce the light right back out the window.

6. Scale Artwork to Your Wall



“There are few things more ridiculous-looking than hanging dinky little art too high on the wall,” says Breining. The middle of a picture should hang at eye level. If one person is short and the other tall, average their heights.

Take scale into account. For a large wall, go big with one oversize piece or group smaller pieces gallery-style. For the latter, don’t space the pictures too far apart—2 to 4 inches between items usually looks best.

7. Layer Your Lighting

Lighting plays an important part in our homes, setting the tone and ambiance. Every room should have three kinds of lighting:

Accent: Accent lighting is more decorative and is used to highlight certain home features, such as artwork.

Ambient: This lighting provides overall illumination and often comes from ceiling fixtures.

Task: Task lighting is often found over a kitchen island or a reading nook.

For a living room, you should have at least 3 watts (42 lumens) per square foot. One visual trick Breining swears by is using uplights. “Placing a canister uplight or a torchiere in the corner will cast a glow on the ceiling, making a room seem bigger,” he says.

8. Anchor Rugs Under Furniture Feet

When it comes to area rugs, placement and sizing are key. “In a living room, all four legs of the sofa and chairs in a furniture grouping should fit on it—the rug should define the seating area,” says Breining. “At the very least, the front two legs of the sofa and chairs should rest on it,” he adds.

Even living rooms with less-than-generous proportions usually require an 8-by-10-foot or a 9-by-12-foot rug to properly accommodate a seating area. Go too small with the rug size and everything looks out of scale.

9. Call in a Pro to Declutter

The longer you live in a house, the less you see the mess over time. Sometimes you need a fresh pair of eyes. You can hire an organizer for a few hours to tackle bookshelves and closets, which are often packed with twice the amount of stuff they should hold. A professional organizer costs on average \$522 per project or between \$55 and \$100 per hour.*

If you prefer to take the DIY approach to decluttering, Breining suggests whittling down what’s on your shelves by 50%. Then mix horizontal stacks of books among the vertical rows and intersperse decorative objects, such as bowls or vases, among them.

*Cost data in this section sourced from Angi

10. Use Visual Tricks To Raise the Ceiling

If your ceilings are on the low side, paint them white to make the room feel more expansive. Hang curtains higher than the windows, suggests Allen-Brett, to trick your eye into thinking the room is taller. Most standard curtain panels measure 84 or 96 inches, allowing you to go about 3 inches above the window casing before the length gets too short.

If you want to hang them higher, you'll have to order custom drapes. Love patterned panels? Try vertical stripes—the lines visually elongate your walls. Leaning a large mirror against a wall can also make a room seem taller.

4. Remove Clutter From Your Home



When you walk in the door, do you feel like you're tiptoeing through a minefield of clutter? When you go to clean up, it can be frustrating if you find your drawers, cabinets, and closets already full. If that's the case, it's a good sign that it's time for you to de-clutter. To help you enjoy a tidy home, we've compiled answers to common questions about your path to a clutter-free lifestyle!

Where do I start with removing clutter?

If you're overwhelmed, take a methodical approach.

Bring home three big boxes from your grocery store. Label each box using a permanent marker: one "Keep", one "Sell", and one "Charity". Also get a large, lined garbage can into which you can toss things that you don't want to keep, sell, or donate. Using an organized approach will help you break down the task.

Tackle just one room.

Each room or area of a house in Sydney can present its own level of decluttering difficulties. If you're not sure where to start, try cleaning up a lesser-used area (like a formal dining

room). Spaces that are less frequently used will likely be easier to declutter and can therefore bring a quick reward to keep you motivated.

Set a time limit for the decluttering session.

Give yourself 15 minutes to one hour, set a timer, and don't start more than you can finish in your allotted time. When the timer rings, make yourself stop, clean up, and then take at least a 15-minute break so you don't burn out. You can always decide to do another round after the break is over.

What's the fastest way to get rid of clutter?

First, shift your mindset to prioritize yourself over your stuff.

To declutter quickly and efficiently, you'll need to recognize that your time and happiness are more important than every item you're evaluating. Set up a sticky note or a sign to remind yourself that you are more than your stuff. Oftentimes, in de-cluttering, it's the emotions surrounding objects that prevent you from getting rid of items.

Use a strict rule to get rid of items.



Decide to get rid of any item that doesn't make you enthusiastically say, "Yes! I want to keep that!" By using strong criteria, you'll be able to make decisions faster instead of staying in the "maybe" zone. If the item isn't a solid "yes!" then throw it into the "Donate," "Sell," or

“Trash” pile. You can decide which pile to use based on the item’s value, signs of wear, and potential usefulness to someone else.

Pick a section of your house to declutter and set a deadline.

Instead of trying to sweep through all areas of your living space, pick one area to start. Once you’ve chosen an area, set a realistic deadline to finish decluttering.

Ask a friend to help you make decisions.

If you need extra help and motivation, contact a friend or family member whose advice and opinions you trust. Ask them to help you decide which items to give up and which items to keep. Because they’re emotionally removed from your stuff, they may help you speed up the decision-making process.

5. Cleaning Tips for Every Room in Your Home



Our professionals share their expert solutions, from basics for beginners to DIY deep-cleans.

There are all kinds of methods and hacks for cleaning just about everything — some of them more effective than others. There are golden rules, 15-minute and 20-minute rules and various stage cleaning methods, which instruct you to follow two, three or up to five steps to help ensure that your home is spotless at all times. But, at the end of the day, most people

are just looking for the best cleaning tips to help them clean faster, more effectively and less frequently. Luckily, we know how to separate fact from fiction when it comes to cleaning so you can actually get your home sparkling with minimal effort.

Even though spring is usually known as the time for deep-cleaning, there's no reason you can't get a head start on your list of spring cleaning chores right now (with the exception of maybe waiting for some warm weather to clean up the yard). You might even be able to make spring cleaning a much smaller event in your home if you tackle a few things ahead of time. Grab your gear and check out these tips from our experts in the Institute Cleaning Lab. Before you know it, you'll have every task on your checklist done.

Vacuum your dryer vent

Once a year, pull your dryer away from the wall and disconnect the vent. Using the hose of your vacuum cleaner, reach into the vent as far as you possibly can and vacuum.

Deep-clean your mattress

Your bed needs a proper cleaning every few months to get rid of dust and dead skin cells, sweat and oils from your body. Remove and wash your sheets as usual. To clean your mattress, use a garment steamer and go over the top, sides and box spring thoroughly to kill any dust mites that may be hiding near the surface. Then use your vacuum's upholstery tool and go over your mattress again. (This will remove the dust mites steaming has killed.) Remove any stains with a carpet and upholstery cleaner without over-wetting the mattress.

Update your gutters

It's best to call in a professional when it's time to clean your gutters, but you can avoid having to make that call too often by having gutter covers installed that allow water to flow into the gutters while keeping leaves and other large debris out.

Remove stains from car seats

It may be hard (or downright impossible if you have kids), but implementing a no-eating-in-the-car rule is the best way to keep car seats free of stains. To remove stains from fabric seats, use a liquid carpet cleaner or portable carpet cleaning machine. Leather seats should only be cleaned with leather cleaner. Don't forget a leather protector afterward!

Vacuum your window blinds

The best way to keep your window blinds clean and looking like new is to remove dust from them weekly. Using the dusting brush attachment on your vacuum, remove the dust from your blinds starting from the top slat, from left to right. Close the blinds in reverse and repeat on the opposite side.

Keep windows sparkling year-round

To clean your windows, wait for a cool, cloudy day and spray a glass cleaner onto the glass, wiping it with a clean microfiber cloth to avoid streaking. Avoid a common window-cleaning mistake by brushing or vacuuming dust from the window frame before wetting the surface.

Restore your dishwasher

Over time, excess food and grime will build up in your dishwasher's interior. Get in the habit of cleaning any remaining bits of foods — beans, pasta and so on — after each dishwashing cycle. Pull out the bottom rack to look for leftover food, and remove it with a paper towel to prevent future odors. Remove food bits from inside the filter too.

Clean and disinfect your toilet



Did you know you have to clean your toilet before disinfecting it? Apply a toilet bowl cleaner and let it sit for up to five minutes before scrubbing it with a stiff-bristled toilet brush. Wipe down the toilet seat and handle with disinfectant wipes, or use your favorite bathroom cleaner spray. Wipe away any grime, then apply a second layer of disinfectant cleaner and allow it to air-dry.

Freshen your shower curtain

To banish moldy spots, throw your plastic or vinyl curtain in the washing machine with a little detergent and bleach (if the curtain is white or clear) and add two or three old white towels for extra cleaning agitation. Then either hang the curtain to dry or put it in the dryer

on low heat for three to four minutes or on air fluff only. To keep it fresher longer, stretch the curtain out after each shower to help moisture dissipate.

Revive cloudy glasses

Remove built-up film from hard-water minerals by soaking stemware in white vinegar for five minutes. Then rinse by hand and dry with a microfiber cloth.

5.1. How To Clean Hard Surfaces In Your Home?



Sprucing up an entire home is tedious, stressful, and time-consuming. Each hard surface requires a specific cleaning approach to prevent dullness or serious damage. From painted walls to countertops and chrome surfaces to hardwood floors, each surface has its own strengths and weaknesses when it comes to cleaning. Some may endure acidic cleaners, while some delicate areas may need more gentle cleaning solutions or just water.

Therefore, it is always recommended to understand the type of surface you are dealing with and use the most appropriate product. Also, read the cleaning and care guidelines mentioned for household in Sydney surfaces like stainless steel appliances, countertops, cooktops, fixtures, and flooring.

In this guide, we will discover the right strategies for cleaning and caring for different hard surfaces in your home. It will also help preserve the beauty of fixtures and fittings while maintaining a shiny and beautiful abode in Sydney all year round.

1. Remove Smudges and Stains From Painted Walls

Whether you have oil-based paint, latex or semi-gloss, you should always begin the process by removing dust from top to bottom using a microfiber duster. After that, consider the following methods to clean different wall finishes:

Oil-based Painted Walls: Add one teaspoon of mild dishwashing liquid and ½ teaspoon white vinegar per quart of warm water. Dip a cloth and spot-clean the walls. Gently wipe it in a circular motion.

Latex Finish: Do not use a water-based solution. Instead, clean with a dry sponge or spot clean with a mild cleaning solution.

Semi-gloss or High-gloss: Use a diluted dishwashing liquid soap and warm water to remove stains and smudges. Use a magic eraser for gentle scrubbing. This will keep the paint intact.

However, if you are at the end of your tenancy, contact experts for a professional end of lease cleaning Sydney. They will spruce up the entire property, including walls, according to a pre-approved cleaning checklist and secure you hard-earned bond money.

2. Ceramic Glass Cooktop: Use the Power of Baking Soda

People often cause damage to the delicate ceramic glass cooktop when scrubbing grease and oil stains. It is important to be gentle when cleaning such surfaces. Always use a soft sponge, microfiber cloth and baking soda paste to remove build-up grease and oil stains. Apply the paste and scrub with a sponge for sparkling results. This will also banish bad smells and lurking germs from surfaces that can cause foodborne illness.

Tip: Avoid using cleaners containing ammonia, bleach or even vinegar as they may discolour the surface.

3. Marble and Granite Surfaces and Tiles: Use Gentle Cleaning Agents

Like any other natural stone surface, marble and granite tiles (bathtubs, countertops, walls, floors) are also prone to scratches if abrasive tools and products are used. Acidic cleaners like vinegar and lemon can dull the surface, while ammonia-based products cause serious damage.

Instead, use baking soda, castile soap or hydrogen peroxide to clean your tiles. Castile soap and baking soda are perfect for regular cleaning. It can even remove soap scum and grime. It

can help remove brown stains from toilets as well. For stubborn stains like mould and mildew, spray hydrogen peroxide and scrub with a soft-bristled brush.

Tip: Rinse the surface with plain water and dry the walls to prevent unpleasant water spots.

4. Porcelain Surfaces: Use Non-Scratch Scrub Sponge



Are your porcelain sinks, bathtubs and other hard surfaces looking their original shine? Removing stains, grime, and grease can be challenging, as harsh products and tools leave scratches behind.

Baking soda is an excellent cleaning agent for porcelain stone surfaces, especially grout lines. Dissolve one tablespoon of baking soda in warm water and gently scrub with a non-scratch sponge or a soft-bristled brush. Let the product rest to break down stains and gunk. Next, rinse with water and dry the surface.

Tip: Use 3% hydrogen peroxide to remove mould spores and mildew stains from porcelain surfaces.

5. Cleaning Kitchen Appliances

Kitchen appliances are usually made of stainless steel surfaces. Use the right method to regularly clean your much-loved appliances, like oven, microwave and refrigerator. Here is a quick guide:

De-grease Filthy Oven: Remove and soak racks in hot, soapy water. Next, apply baking soda paste inside your oven (except heating coils). Leave it for a few minutes. This will dislodge build-up grease. Now, use a damp sponge to clean the interiors and other parts.

Steam Clean Microwave: Add a microwave-safe bowl of vinegar, lemon juice, and water to the appliance and heat it for 2-3 minutes. Leave the door closed to allow the steam to break down gunk and grease. Next, scrub with a sponge or damp cloth.

Empty and Clean the Fridge: Remove all food and toss expired or stale items. Next, remove the shelves and soak them in hot, soapy water. Meanwhile, spray a white vinegar solution inside your appliance and wipe down with a cloth or sponge.

Tip: Follow this guide and clean all types of metals and surfaces like a pro or hire professionals for a thorough end of lease cleaning Sydney.

6. Achieve Streak-Free Glass Surfaces

Use the diluted white vinegar solution and warm water to clean your window glass, mirrors, and shower doors. Spray and wipe with a cloth or sponge to remove dirt and stains. Then, run a rubber squeegee to achieve a streak-free and sparkling surface like a pro.

Tip: Never use a newspaper to wipe down your glass, as it will leave ink residue behind.

7. Natural Products to Clean Wooden Surfaces



Cleaning wooden furniture, floors, cabinets, tables, and doorframes requires proper care and the right methods. You can use white vinegar or mild dish soap and hot water to remove adhesive stains and grime. Do not use excessive water, as it can damage the surface. In the final step, polish it with olive oil to see sparkling results.

8. Vinyl and Linoleum Flooring

Vinyl and linoleum floors are prone to abrasive tools and harsh cleaners. Excessive water can also cause damage. So, be careful and use a HEPA-filtered vacuum machine to clean the floors. It can remove loose dirt and debris with perfection.

For stubborn stains and grime, dampen your microfiber mop in a hot soapy water, and wring out excess solution when you mop the surface. Clean your floors regularly to keep dirt and grime at bay.

You can also prefer hiring experts for a quality end of lease cleaning Sydney. They cover every inch of the rental property to help you pass the final inspection and secure your full bond money.

Conclusion

Enhancing the appearance of your home is a rewarding process that blends creativity, functionality, and personal style. By implementing small yet impactful changes—such as decluttering, incorporating natural elements, updating lighting, and adding personal touches—you can create a space that feels refreshed, inviting, and uniquely yours. Remember, improving your home doesn't have to be expensive or time-consuming; even minor updates can make a big difference. Whether you're aiming for a modern aesthetic, a cozy ambiance, or a mix of both, the key lies in thoughtful planning and execution. Start with one area at a time, and enjoy the journey of transforming your house into a beautiful home in Sydney.

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