

A Special
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Helpful tips for do-it-yourself decorators

If you're a do-it-yourself decorator eager for a different look in home furnishing, you're not alone.

The following tips may point you in the right direction.

- Start with quality furniture that can be easily accessorized. Select a brand that you're familiar with and pay attention to the warranty. Choose pieces that contain neutral colours, patterns and simple lines. Above all, look for furniture that you will feel comfortable using for seven to eight years—the average life of a piece.

- Be creative with furniture finishes. Metal furniture always mixes with wood furniture, and using a variety of finishes gives the home a rich look.

- Rearrange—or exchange—furniture for new looks. For example, replace a wood coffee table with a glass-top table, or pull a sectional group towards the middle of the room to add a new point of interest.

- Enhance the space in smaller rooms. Decorate in light colours and use simple window treatments—or no window treatments at all—to create the perception of a larger room.

- Have fun with your window treatments. Try a length of fabric swagged over a window or distinctive cloth napkins on a brass curtain rod to finish the room's mood.

- Substitute accessories for a quick change. Choose accessories that reflect the mood you're creating—brass candlesticks and plant holders for an elegant look or wicker baskets and fun artwork for a more comfortable atmosphere.

- Paint your exterior door. Choose a colour that reflects your style and personality and works well with your home's colour scheme.

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