

How to transform your basement from cold to cozy

Basements are one of the most under-used spaces in the home, because they're often dark, chilly and uninviting. But with a few changes, you can turn yours into a functional living space the whole family will enjoy. Here are some reno and design tips for a basement makeover:

Upgrade flooring

The first step is a solid foundation, so whether you're finishing it for the first time or improving a dated one, you need a subfloor to protect against mould and mildew. "A basement renovation can get

expensive, so it's important to protect your investment," explains Bryan Baeumler, contractor and HGTV host. "Choose a high-quality subfloor like DriCore, which protects finished floors and makes them feel warmer by insulating against cold concrete. It's easy to install – a room can be done in just half a day."

Layer textiles

Keep things cozy and comfortable with plenty of fabrics that add both tactile and visual warmth. Think high-pile rugs and plenty of faux fur throw pillows and chunky

blankets. Hate those traditional small basement windows? Fake the look of large windows by hanging floor-length drapes on a high rod for a billowy effect.

Add lighting

Don't forget to include lots of smart light fixtures to open and brighten up the space. Avoid harsh or dim lighting and opt for a variety of lamps at various heights. Choose one or two floor lamps with a soft, warm glow and enhance the mood with table lamps, overhead pendant or spot lights and even candles.

Think texture

Adding natural elements that are soft and textural can help you forget all about the sterile concrete feelings associated with many basements. Wood elements, such as rustic floating shelves, birch-wrapped candles or chunky pine side tables, will remind you of nature and the outdoors. You can also incorporate woven baskets for storage and an effortless cottage or beach aesthetic.

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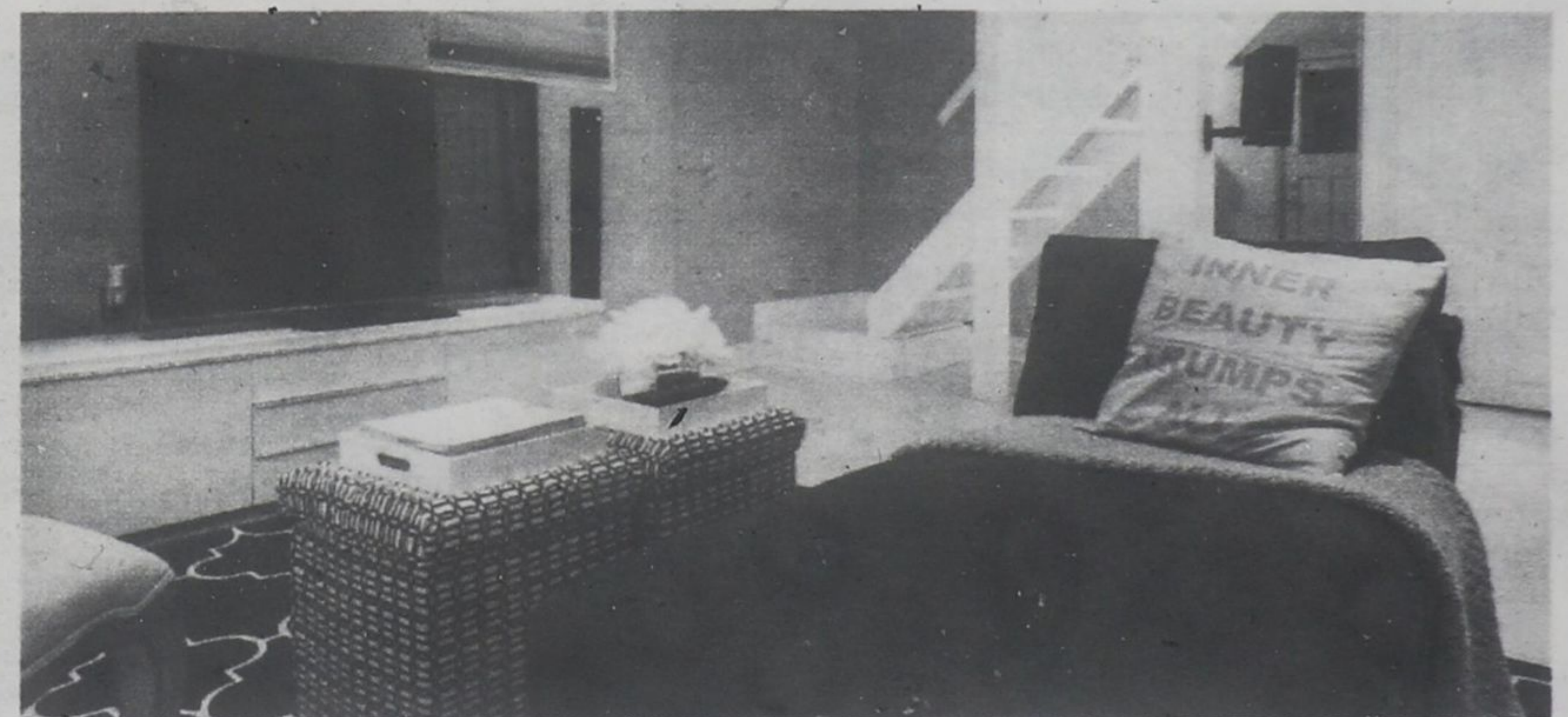
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