

BUDGET

INTERIOR DECORATING FOR THE BEGINNER



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Introduction

Everyone wants to furnish their home lavishly, but not everyone can afford lavish prices. The good news is you can build and create a magnificent and well-designed home no matter your budget. This guide will help you create a superior interior for your home that will eventually become your sanctuary. Are you ready to experience interior decorating without spending oodles of money?

You landed in just the right place to learn everything you need to know to decorate your home no matter your budget. Before you learn how to decorate your home, let us first explore some myths people have when it comes to interior decorating. Understanding and overcoming these myths, having the ability to tell fact from fiction, is what ultimately results in success as you work to create the living space of your dreams.

Myth Buster

Interior decorating is not as difficult as it may seem, but there are people that may lead you to believe that it is. Anyone can enjoy simple decorating projects to enhance the beauty of their home, whether new or refurnished. You do not have to spend a lot of money to create a superior interior for your home. This is the number one myth people believe when they think about interior decorating.

Some of the most beautiful homes are designed and decorated with simple, practical and beautiful objects. Are you someone that has fallen prey to this myth? Then let us think practically. Find out exactly what is and is not true when it comes to interior decorating, so you can create a comfortable, personal and well-designed home.

The tips and ideas offered in this guide are suitable for those interested in decorating a new home, or for those interested in improving the look and feel of the home they already have. When considering decorating on a limited budget, there are certain facts you should easily separate from fiction. What are these facts?

Here are some important “facts” you should know:

- ➡ You can improve the ambience of any room in your home without spending a fortune. Interior decorating is easily accomplished even when you have little or no money to spend. Sometimes, it involves simply rearranging the items and objects in your home.

- ➡ You do not have to have any experience as an interior decorator to improve the look and feel of your home. Most people know instinctively how to improve the look of their home. We will teach you how to do this while working on a budget, so you can have everything you want, without going broke.
- ➡ You can increase the value of your home by improving a few areas of your home inexpensively. You can use a few simple tools and techniques to create a more prosperous living environment. You will learn this throughout this book.
- ➡ You do have to set a budget when decorating, or you WILL spend too much money, because frankly, interior decorating is fun! We will teach you how to set an appropriate budget later in this guide. When you create your budget, stick to it, and you will create the home of your dreams.

This guide will teach you how to decorate any room in your home without breaking the bank. Whether you have \$100 to spend or \$10,000 to spend, you can use any of the tips in this book to liven the rooms in your home.

Keep in mind the term “budget” means something different for everyone. The good news is this guide provides information for people that want a superior designed interior regardless of their budget. All of the tips, strategies and tools provided in this guide are for people interested in interior decorating without spending a fortune. There are some ideas you can elaborate on and spend more money on if you have the right budget. Or, you can allow yourself to indulge in the simple tactics and strategies in this guide and use any extra money you have on special treats for yourself or your family.

You will find decorating tips that cost nothing, and some that may cost a few hundred or thousand dollars. Pick out the tips that coincide with your budget, and you will find it easier than you think to design the interior of your home easily and completely.

Are you ready to learn more? Then what are we waiting for? In the next section, you will take the first important step toward improving the appearance of your home. You will learn how to analyze your home and identify areas of your home that need the most improvement. If you are working with a new home, you may need to consider decorating one room at a time.

If you plan to decorate an existing home, you can use the ideas outlined in the next section to identify the rooms in your home requiring the most attention and influx of techniques and cash.

Home analysis is different for everyone. The steps outlined in the next section apply whether you live in a duplex, small home or large compound. Make sure you read this section thoroughly, so you can create a blueprint for success when planning to decorate the interior of your home on a budget.

Step 1: Analyzing Your Home

Before you can begin any project, you first have to look at your home and evaluate what is most important for you to design or redesign. If you do have a tight budget, you might want to concentrate your efforts on one or two living areas of your home. Once you have more money to work with, you can always go back and decorate other areas of your home.

Some people find interior decorating a lifelong process...

You may find you spend time redecorating your home throughout your life. That is one reason you want to decorate within a budget, so you do not end up breaking the bank during the process. When analyzing your home, you should take an objective view of your home. Sometimes this involves asking an outsider to walk through your home with you and recommend areas that need improvement.

Ultimately, you will decide what areas of your home to improve. Sometimes however, you will find working with someone may result in helpful suggestions (like adding shelving to reduce clutter). You may even find a friend that has experience with interior decorating. Working with a friend when analyzing your home is much less expensive than working with someone you hire to decorate or evaluate your home.

Common Sense Approaches

When you analyze your home, you are taking inventory of the items or aspects of your home that you like, and those you want to change. As you go through your home, it is important you take a common sense approach. Keep a pen and paper handy, and make sure you write down any ideas you have. For each room of your home you plan to decorate, you can create separate notes on separate pages.

That way you approach interior decorating using common sense and practical, organized methods. Now, there are two ways to approach analysis. If you analyze a new home, you will approach evaluation from a “whole house” perspective, trying to get the most bang for your buck. If you want to improve the look and feel of your current home, you can still analyze your entire home, but may spend more time concentrating on one or two rooms in your home you know need the most attention.

The New Home Approach

Analyzing your home is easy if you are working to decorate a new home. Take each room independently and discover what the most important areas are for you to focus on. As mentioned above, whether decorating for a new home or for an existing home, you must always approach interior decorating on a budget by focusing your attention on one or two rooms at a time.

When you buy a new home, you will have to analyze what items you already have that you can use in your home (like beds or sofas) and what items you need to buy to complete your home. If for example, you move to a larger home, you may need to buy some additional furniture for added rooms in your home. When working on a budget, you may use what you have already, and decorate rooms individually, one room at a time. If you try to decorate all at once, you may find you spend too much money and too much time worrying about budgeting for your home. Take one or two rooms, and make them the focus of your work.

Later, you can save money to decorate other or all the rooms in your home if this is your goal.

Redecorating an Existing Home

Most people prioritize their schedules and plans to decorate based on the rooms they feel need the most help. Often people want to decorate a single room in the home. Others may select a grouping of rooms, like the bedrooms, or a single bedroom to redecorate or decorate for a new arrival (like a baby).

For some people the rooms they focus on are the ones people are most likely to see on visiting. For example, you may want to improve the appearance of your living room or foyer. Others want to improve the functionality of rooms, like the kitchen. Perhaps you want more space in your kitchen so you can cook, but also entertain company. You may want to liven up your kitchen so it appears larger if you lack adequate counter space. Make sure as you walk through the rooms you want to focus on, you take notes of what items are most important for you to change.

Remember, as you walk through a home and start analyzing it, you may change your mind about what is and is not a priority. You may want to improve the look of your bedroom, or design a new bedroom for a new baby entering your life. Whatever you want to do, the key to your success is setting a budget. This applies whether you work with an existing home, or whether you plan to decorate a new home. The budget should be the foundation for all decisions you make

about interior decorating. Your budget will help you decide what items you must buy, and what items you can decorate with little attention or fanfare. You may decide to embark on some do-it-yourself projects so you save money and can spend money on areas that need the most attention.

Interior decorating can be expensive, but not if you take a logical approach to decorating.

Sometimes, some of the finest homes you see are those that use common sense approaches to decorating. Common sense begins with analysis of your home and establishing a budget to work with. Never forget that. Never step away from your budget, or you may find you plunge into debt.

Tips on Setting Your Budget

You set a budget by first deciding what rooms you need to decorate. You do this when you finish analyzing your home. After you make your notes, sit down and decide what areas of your home you want to concentrate on.

If you are having a new baby or have an addition to your home, this is easy. You will likely select these rooms to decorate first. If you plan to decorate multiple rooms in a home, this can be a bit more challenging but certainly not impossible. You will simply need to learn how to prioritize your interior decorating, and learn how to create an interior without spending too much. (We will learn more about that later).

So first, set a budget. How do you do that, right?

The answer is simple. Find out how much money you have available for decorating.

Consider when setting your budget your monthly income, your bills, and how much money you can afford to spend on decorating **without feeling guilty**, and **without increasing your debt-to-income ratio**. Meaning, you want to avoid going into debt simply by furnishing your home. So figure out how much money you have to play with. Write this number down, because you will refer back to it often when selecting instruments to decorate your home.

When creating a budget, you may find a few items you want to charge. This is ok, just make sure you can pay for those items in a short time. If you charge too much when decorating, you may end up paying ten times more for interior

decorating than you wanted to. Remember all charge cards carry interest rates. Unless you can pay off what you charge within a month's time, think long and hard before considering your credit balance as part of your budget.

After creating a budget, follow these steps to help you analyze your home's needs:

- ➡ **Prioritize the rooms you want to decorate.** Label each room. When the time comes to decorate, you will start with the room at the top of your list. You may stop there until you have more money to decorate other rooms, or move to another room if you still have some spare cash. You may find using the tips in this guide, you can decorate all the rooms in your home to your heart's desire. It all depends on your budget, and how much time you want to spend on do-it-yourself projects.
- ➡ **Determine how much money you have available to use for interior decorating.** You established your budget when calculating your expenses for the month. If you have several rooms to decorate, consider dividing your budget by the number of rooms you want to decorate. You may then allocate slightly more or less to rooms that need more help than others. For example, you may want to spend more money when decorating the living or dining areas than you spend in your bedrooms.
- ➡ **Create a list of the rooms you can decorate based on your budget in the immediate future.** Sometimes the room you prioritize as #1 may be too expensive to decorate in the short-term. Try to make small changes, and select another high-priority room to decorate that fits within your current budget. If you have only one room, use the money you do have to decorate the room as much as you can by using the tips provided in this guide. Start with high-priority items. You can always decorate your room further when you have more income to spare.
- ➡ **Make sure you note items you have already that you can refurbish to improve the look and feel of your home, and items you need to replace or buy new (as in the case of a new room or home).** Anything you can refurbish will probably cost less than items you must buy new. Sometimes you have to reevaluate any preconceived notions you have about what interior decorating is or is not. Remember, the goal here is to create a fresh look for the rooms in your home without spending a fortune. This may require some hands-on work. You may find you love and enjoy

the process, most people find it very therapeutic. Once you finish decorating your rooms, feel proud you had a hand in creating the ambience you did.

Once you set up a budget, spend some time shopping around and reading through the ideas in this book. If you find you only have enough money to work on one or two rooms, start your own design “savings” jar. This is nothing more than an empty jar you can stash a small amount of money away in, loose change etc., for a few months, to save for your next decorating extravaganza. Make sure you do not take money out of this jar. If you feel tempted to do so, then set up a CD or closed bank account where you are penalized for removing your savings too early. Saving for interior decorating is much like saving for retirement. You want to stash away your money wisely and safely, and only draw on it when the time comes to do so without penalty.

Sometimes, a little spare change is all it takes...

Some people collect spare change to pay for a night on the town. If you want to decorate your home, save your spare change for interior decorating. Keep a piggy bank full of coins, and you will find before you know it you have just the right amount of money to pay for what you need.

Now is time to move on to the fun part. You know what rooms you want to decorate, you have a budget. Now is the time to decide what type of person you are, and what themes or styles you want your home to reflect. Most homes reflect the personality and preferences of the owner. Make sure you spend time analyzing your own preferences, so when you do decorate, you make choices you feel happy with.

Themes and Styles

It is important when analyzing your home you consider the themes and styles that dominate your home. Find out what you like about your home, and what you feel you must change to be more “at home” in your home. If you recently bought a house, you may find you want to change the entire interior. There is nothing wrong with this, just make sure you spend enough time evaluating your home and your preferences before you make changes.

You do not want to waste money and time buying country-themed décor only to find later you much prefer a more contemporary styled home.

Keep in mind when doing this some themes or styles may include more expensive adornments than others are, but for the most part, no matter your theme or preference you can find ways to decorate your home even on a tight budget.

How do you select a theme for your home? Think about the homes you visit and what you like and do not like about them, as this will give you an idea about what “type” of person you are and what styles you like best. Consider looking through a few interior decorating magazines so you can distinguish between contemporary, modern, art deco, country and other styles.

You should also inventory your own home and the furnishings you currently have, as they may provide some insight into your style and preferences.

For example, do you like a contemporary look and feel? Are you stylish? Or perhaps you prefer a more vintage or classical styled home. Others prefer a country look, while still others prefer a balanced home styled in multiple ways.

The types of decorations you adorn your home will eventually reflect your personality and style preferences, so this is an important step when budgeting for your interior.

Once you decide on the theme of your home, you will have a better idea of what areas of your home need the most attention when it comes to decorating and changing up the current look of your home. Perhaps for example, most of your home has a contemporary look and style, but you find your dining area is more modern or classic. You may also want to create a home that is more useful. If your home is more decorative than you like, you can change that. Just make sure you know what you want before you start making changes.

You might want to change the look of your dining area by adding a few pieces or changing the furniture to reflect the style that encompasses the rest of your home. You may want to create a kitchen that has greater utility and open space for you to move within.

Do not think however, you have to style your home in one exact way. Some people prefer to decorate their homes in multiple styles. Your living area for

example, may reflect a country-like elegance, while your kitchen may resemble a country pad. While it is easier to stick with one style, ultimately you decide what you want (and do not want) your home to look like. You may find it fun to mix and match when decorating. This often works well with couples that have different preferences when it comes to styles and themes. Work with your partner when deciding how you want to decorate certain rooms. You can each take charge of a room so you both feel included in the decorating process.

TIP

Make certain you make a list of “must have” items before you start decorating. Some things you may find you cannot live without...

For some these may include sofas, beds, tables and the like. For others, important must haves can include plants or artwork. Must haves are items that help you feel complete, but also are necessary for you to feel comfortable in your home.

If you have the basics and only need items to complement the look and feel of your home, you will find decorating a piece of cake.

In the next section, we will talk about a few simple things you can do to improve the ambience in your home without spending a bundle of money. The whole purpose of this guide is after all, to teach you HOW to decorate without spending too much in the way of money. Bargain interior decorating... you are one-step away from learning everything there is to know...

Step 2: Make Small Changes First

If you want to succeed at interior decorating on a budget, you must think small. Most people believe to be successful at interior decorating, they must make dramatic changes to their entire living area. This very seldom is the case. In fact, smart decorators are those that take on projects that are small first, before moving on to extensive endeavors.

Sometimes small changes are all that are needed to make a big difference in your home's appearance.

In this section, you will learn about some simple steps and ideas you can take to improve your home's appearance. Once you take the steps outlined in this section, you may find you redecorate your home without spending a single penny. Chances are high you will spend some money, but you can improve the look and feel of your home by making changes that require time, not money. We will show you how.

You may find after adopting some of the changes in this section you need not change your home any further. Decorating on a budget can be as complex or simple as you want it. Try to simplify your life, and you will find becoming a successful interior decorator the easiest job in the world.

Here are a few small ways to make dramatic differences in the way your home looks and feels.

Small Changes to Improve Existing Rooms

1. **Consider adding wallpaper to a room that needs a little perk up.** You can also use wall-border, which is much less expensive, to decorate the lower or upper sides of a wall. Alternately, you can create borders by painting or stenciling designs on your walls, or by removing existing borders to give a room a new look or feel.
2. **Find some mirrors and place them in locations in your home where they reflect light.** This will make the room you place the mirrors in appear larger. Your home will also seem as if it receives more sunlight. Do not place mirrors throughout your home in areas where they detract from the room's appearance,

or in places where they reflect unattractive objects (like your garage or driveway) unless you really want this.

3. **Try restoring old furniture or antiques rather than buying new furniture, which may be expensive, but not nearly as valuable as your used item.** You can do this inexpensively with the help of a local Home Depot or home improvement store. You may need to sand and finish, then stain a dresser for example, to improve its appearance. In cases where you need to cover water stains, you may consider placing a strategically positioned crocheted cloth or other decorative item, such as a lamp.
4. **Cover stains up rather than re-carpet your home.** You do not have to hire a stain removal specialist to improve the appearance of your carpet. So many people have stains on their carpet, and most find a way to decorate over them without spending a fortune. Let's face it. Often times, once a stain is there, it is hard to get rid of, no matter how much you wash it. You may wash it so that it appears to go away, only to find it reappears a few weeks later. Fortunately, no stain is impossible to hide. And hide it you will IF you want to save money. Most bargain interior decorator's tactfully use furniture and throw rugs to cover up hard-to-remove stains. If you have young children, buy some inexpensive remnants to place throughout your home so you can easily remove and wash them if they become stained.
5. **Try letting more light in your home.** If you have curtains, remove them. Try blinds, or try a bare window. Just be sure you keep your window clean. You may want to paint or stencil on the window using paints you can find at any hobby store. This creates the effect of stained glass, without spending the money. Some people find they can use stick on appliqués on a bare window to create the appearance of stained glass. These appliqués are inexpensive, and you can usually find them on the Web. They are a great tool for decorating children's rooms, as many come in cartoon themes.

6. **Consider adding some plants or a small, inexpensive fountain in your home to add a subtle ambience and calming appeal.** If you do not have a green thumb, go with something that is easy to grow, and hardy, like a bamboo tree (some believe this even brings prosperity and luck to your home. You do not have to buy a one thousand dollar fountain. Try getting a small yet attractive \$15 fountain online. Throw some rocks in it and let it go. You may find you feel more at peace in your home. Fountains are also very useful for improving the ambience of a home office.
7. **Use fabrics to help improve the look and feel of tired furnishings.** Fabric stores sell beautiful fabrics and slipcovers inexpensively. Far less expensive is it to use a cover or recover an existing sofa than to buy a new one. If you are not handy with a needle and thread, look for slipcovers that can instantly change the look and feel of your sofa (and even hide stains).
8. **Try painting one or more of the walls in your room or in many rooms in your home to give your home a fresh start.** You can buy paint inexpensively, and you do not have to hire a professional painter to do the work (though you can find some college students handy at painting, that are likely to charge less than “professional” painters). Use light and bright colors for rooms you enjoy during the day, and calming colors like blue or dark green for rooms you want to relax in. Make sure the colors you select match the furniture you have or the upholstery you use in your home. Some people find good painting is all they need to decorate their homes in a new and meaningful way.
9. **Try using lamps with no shades, or decorate plain shades you have at home.** This will add color and intensity to any room. You can buy colored bulbs that add an interesting look and feel to almost any room, and make any lamp look wonderful instead of lacking when you do not use a shade.
10. **Use even more paint to create a mural on a wall or a sponge you dipped in the paint to add texture to a wall’s surface in your home.** You can practice this ahead of time by

applying the paint to a piece of old wood, or a wall you plan to repaint anyway. There are endless ways to decorate using paint, so give paint a try. Do not simply consider paint as something to use as a cover for an entire wall. Consider it an accessory where plausible. Some people for example, buy inexpensive stencils and decorate the walls of a room in their home by applying paint to the stencils. This is especially fun for a young child's room or playroom, where you can stencil paint your child's name, the letters of the alphabet or fun numbers.

Remember, small changes often make a big impression on you and the people visiting your home. Start small, see what you think. If you want to move on, you can.

Now that you know what it takes to change a small room or part of your home, let us now take some time to evaluate change on a much larger scale. Remember, even while making massive changes to the inside of your home, this guide is all about budgeting.

Some people find however, after implementing some small changes they change the list they made when first prioritizing the way they felt their home should look. If you find the small changes you make are enough to create an aesthetically appealing environment, you may opt for only one big change, your "high-ticket" item, or you may decide to stick with small changes indefinitely, so you can decorate the entire interior of your home. Remember, the choice is yours. The lesson to learn is to start small.

Starting small will also build your skills and aptitude for making larger changes when the time is right. You may find you can put off making larger changes for several years when you make a few changes to improve the appearance of your home.

Now is the time to learn how to make a big difference in the way one room or several rooms in your home look without spending a fortune. While we have spent a lot of time talking about how wonderful small changes are (and they are), there are times when large changes are really what you want to decorate your home's interior.

Some refer to this process as the home “makeover.” We’ve all seen the shows on television, where people have \$3,000 and have to redecorate an entire home, providing it a new, fresh face. You can do the same, and spend even less money.

Ready to learn how? Then move on to the next chapter.

Step 3: Taking The Plunge

Sometimes small changes are not enough to create the dramatic changes you want in your home. You know this, we drilled the point into your head.

Sometimes, big changes are also useful. You may find after living in a home for many years, you need a makeover. Sometimes, you find your home needs a make-under. We will teach you how to do both, without spending too much or too little.

There are people who work with budgets that are large enough to afford complete overhauls of one or more rooms in the house using any technique they want. If this is the case, the tips in this section will help you decorate on a larger scale without breaking the bank. You can use all the money you save for a nice vacation. Remember, even if doing a complete makeover, there is no reason you have to spend a fortune when decorating your home.

How do you complete an entire makeover when working on a budget? The answer is simple... goal setting.

Goal Setting

You already recognize how important it is for you to inventory your home before decorating, and how important it is to budget before decorating. Once you accomplish these two feats, you can then set goals reflecting your needs and opinions, your wants and desires for your home.

You can set up long or short-term goals for your home. Complete overhauls of your entire home are possible, especially when you set short, medium and long-term goals. By doing this, you establish a timeline for completing your homes interior décor.

Good Goal Setting

Good goal setting is very important for your success as a budget interior decorator. Your goals should reflect the changes you want to make in your home, and fit within your budget.

Each goal you set should be affordable, manageable and attainable. Here are some examples of good goals you can set when planning to overhaul your home:

1. Remove all old wall paper in the front room within 2 weeks
2. Review paints and colors at the local home improvement store by next Wednesday.
3. Shop for discount bamboo flooring on the 23rd.
4. Re-stain and finish the exterior deck before the end of summer
5. Find throw rugs for all spots on the carpet by early Fall
6. Paint the great room and kitchen by the end of Spring

Notice anything about these goals? They are all manageable. They all include a specific object (like painting or removing wallpaper) and a timeframe for completion of the task-at-hand.

Setting goals is good when you know you can achieve your them. The only way you have to measure whether you succeed is by evaluating what progress you are making. You do this by setting dates or times of the year you want to have certain interior decorating projects started or completed by.

You may find as you make small changes to your home your goals change slowly but steadily. As you reach certain goals, you may add new goals or objectives to your list.

When setting goals, try to prioritize your goals and align them with the rooms you prioritize for refurnishing or decorating in your home. For example, if you plan a complete overhaul of your home, but want to start with the family room, your short term goals should include the steps you need to take to improve the appearance of this room.

Once you achieve these goals, you can move on to other relevant goals. Create new ones, so the creative process never ends.

Once you have your goals in place, you can move to the next step, which is researching the materials you will need to accomplish your goals. When evaluating the equipment and tools you need, you want to consider the quality of the material along with your price.

Usually you can find quality materials without paying high prices, you just have to learn how to look for them. Most people turn to the Net when looking for goods or products to decorate their home. You will also find many local retailers and home improvement stores often offer specials on select items during various times of the year. Keep your ears and eyes open for these specials so you can take advantage of them.

You can always shop for clearance items, and stock up so when the time comes to redecorate you have all you need, and you only spent what money you planned to by following your budget. Here are some added tips for buying the items you need to decorate your home on a larger-scale, without spending too much money.

Buying Products to Decorate Your Home

If you plan to decorate your home's interior, you will need to buy supplies to do this properly. These supplies may include wood flooring, a tool kit, wallpaper, glue...

Key to a successful transition on a budget is organization. If you create a list of items you need to achieve your goals one room at a time, you will save money, and avoid paying money for supplies you find you do not need. You will not survive if you simply start making changes without thinking about how to make changes smartly. Remember, you must create a blueprint for success. Lay out everything you want to change in your home before you make any changes, and then go for it.

How do you know what supplies you need? Evaluate the changes you want to make to a room. If you plan to paint a room for example, you will need different supplies than if you plan to wallpaper a room. Since painting is one of the least expensive ways to decorate, let us spend some time talking about the art of interior painting and ways you can buy inexpensive paint for your home.

Painting Tips for Decorators on a Budget

Painting a wall or your entire home is a simple and inexpensive way to decorate. You do not have to paint all the rooms in your home to add ambience and elegance to your home. In fact, most people on a budget start with one room, and eventually work their way up to decorating their entire home. You may find painting one wall makes a dramatic difference in the way your home looks. Try it, let it sit for a while, and then paint some more if you feel you need to.

When you decide what room or rooms you want to paint (or what walls need paint) you must buy proper tools. You do not want to buy unnecessary items. Always look for the best paint, but not the most expensive. Paint is much like a bottle of fine wine. Some of the best wines are not the most expensive wines, but not the cheapest either. Usually they fall somewhere between the two extremes.

Say for example, you want to paint your living room, and place some artwork on the walls. To achieve these goals, you may need:

- **A drop cloth or other item to catch paint that falls from rollers or brushes while you paint.** You can buy a formal cloth, or use large blankets you have no other use for and do not mind spilling paint on as long as the paint won't leak through to the floor. Some people prefer to coat their floors with plastic first and then a drop cloth of some sort. You may find a used drop cloth at a garage sale. The same is true of wall hangings for your newly painted home.
- **Buy indoor paint and possibly a protective coating, to help prevent chipping or damage to your walls.** If you are not sure what type of paint you need, ask an expert at your local interior design or home improvement store. You can select from many paint colors and textures. Many come with built in lacquers or chip proof ingredients that will save you money. Often you will find you do not need to buy the most expensive paint to get good paint. Ask a specialist to refer you to the best paint you can get within the budget you have. You can also research the type of paint you should buy online. You may find it less expensive to order paint online after consulting with an expert at your local home improvement store.
- **Paint brushes or rollers.** Here is another example of a product you want to buy that is of good quality. However, your brushes and roller do not have to be the most expensive on the market.

- **Nails or hooks to hang wall fixtures with, unless you already have a readily available supply.** You may also need a hammer.
- **A ladder if you plan to paint ceilings in your home, or other hard-to-reach areas in the home.** If you are not comfortable using a ladder, be sure you have someone with you to steady the ladder when you use it.
- **Tape you can use to cover the borders underneath your wall so you do not accidentally spill paint on them.** You can find the right kind of tape at most home improvement stores. You want tape that is not going to leave a sticky film on your walls, but tape that is stronger than scotch tape. “Painters” tape is all you have to ask for.

You may need other supplies depending on the type of painting you want to do. If you plan to decorate over paint by applying stencils or by using the sponge painting technique, you will need different supplies. Again, do your homework. Seek some advice from an expert at your local paint or home-improvements store. They will tell you what you need. Make sure you buy only what you need, and not the extras they may try to sell to you.

If you are not able to buy all you need, find out if you have friends or family members that may have some of the supplies you want, and ask to borrow them. Most will be more than happy to lend a hand, and may even help you paint.

Painting Tips To Save You Time And Money

If you paint rather than hire someone to paint, you will save a lot of money. You do want your home to look elegant however, so if you plan to paint it is important you do it right.

Here are some tips to ensure you paint well even if you have zero experience painting.

- **Always use a plastic cloth called a drop cloth to protect your floors or carpets from dripping paint.** I know we’ve pointed this out before, but you would be surprised at how many people fail to use a proper cloth. You will spend more money getting paint stains out of your carpet than you will to paint your walls if you are not careful.

- **Cover your paint can with plastic or set on a cardboard surface so paint does not drip from your paint can onto your floor.** You do not after all want to spend even more money buying products to remove spilled paint.
- **Cover your shoes and other articles of clothing to avoid paint stains.** You can use simple plastic bags or shower caps to protect your shoes, and select a tired or worn out pair of jeans and a t-shirt to use for painting projects. Be sure you take the covers off your shoes before you walk around the rest of your house, so you do not spread paint to floors in other rooms in your home.
- **If you plan to paint the ceiling, do this first.** If you do not, paint might drip to your walls.
- **When painting, always paint from high to low, again to help prevent unnecessary dripping.** If you make a mistake, do not fret, cover it and try again.
- **Tape around electrical outlets (and remove the covering) to avoid paint leakage.** You can also place tape around moldings to help prevent accidental spills.
- **Fill in any holes in your walls unless you plan to hang a picture in the exact place you paint over.** You can do this easily with a little “spackle” available at almost any home improvements store. You may find you can borrow some from a friend or neighbor, if you want to save money and do not want to buy an entire can.
- **Use a primer when needed.** If for example, you plan to paint a dark wall a lighter color, use another lighter color to paint over the dark color to prime or prepare your wall, so the color you select turns out the way you want it to look.

You may want to try painting a small room first before moving on to larger projects. The more practice you get, the better you will be at painting. Some

people take time out of their day to follow professional painters as they do their job. You might consider this, especially if you know someone that paints well. Or, you may know a professional painter that could use some of your services, and offer a trade, so you save money.

For example, you may offer to do their taxes if they paint the interior of your home. Just make sure if you do enter agreements like this, you always sign a contract so you avoid unnecessary battles about who agreed on what. You should also make sure you set a deadline for all work to be completed by. This helps prevent arguments.

If you are still not sure about what you need, check in with the experts. Here are some great resources for information on what types of paints to buy and accessories if you plan to decorate your home inexpensively. By researching these sites, you will save money on a costly consultant or professional estimate of your needs.

- **See My Design** – This site offers a comprehensive review of paint products, color selection advice and paint safety. You can even click on links to specific brands of paint to learn more about them. You will find tips for designing or decorating your walls using abstract techniques, and even learn about texture and layout. Just visit: www.seemydesign.com/livingroom/elementsideas/paint/index.htm. You can also visit the main site at SeeMyDesign.com and use the search box to research paint and other interior decorating tools and advice.
- **DIY** – This site, “Do It Yourself” offers tips for interior decorating and painting for people on a budget. The best way to save money is to do something yourself. The link provided here will take you to the page that talks about interior paint. You will find a dozen or more tips about buying paint and supplies, as well as tips for painting if you are a novice painter. You can search for tips using the main link at DIYnetwork.com and type interior paint into the search box, or use the navigation bar on the left to find information on other important interior decorating tips for the “do it yourselfer.”
- **The Home And Family Network** – Here you will find a wealth of information about selecting the right colors for your home. Selecting color is half the battle when it comes to painting. You can also use the

navigation bar to gain additional insight about decorating your home. Visit: www.homeandfamilynetwork.com/decorating/color.html

Remember there are thousands of resources you can look into about painting. You can even buy books that teach you how to paint well, or take classes. Many home improvement stores hold workshops that last anywhere from an hour to a day, and most are less expensive even after you buy the paint than hiring a professional painter to do the job for you.

The more time you spend planning, the more money you will save.

Complete Home Makeovers Extras

Most people want to do more than paint when they plan a complete makeover for their home or a room in their home. Fortunately, you can still do this with your budget. You have to plan for these additional changes and incorporate them into your makeover blueprint for success.

In this section, we will talk about how to save money making over various areas of your home. You may even find you come up with your own incredible ideas after reading some of the handy tips and tools provided.

We covered many topics individually to help provide the most information possible on almost any type of improvement you may make to your home. The tips provided are for people on any budget, but they will save everyone using them money.

Circle the ideas or write down the ideas you think will work best for your home after reviewing this list. You may decide to combine some of these with a new paint job to decorate your home the way you like.

Tips for Improving Flooring

One simple way to change your home's appearance is to address poor flooring. People with carpeted floors usually fall into two categories; they do not like the color of their carpets or their carpets are worn out and stained.

Regardless of your situation, you do not need to pay money to have new wall-to-wall carpeting installed to fix the look of your carpet and improve the interior of your home. You can buy throw rugs to hide stains on your carpet. Many people put furniture over worn areas of carpet.

There is this idea that you should not put carpet over carpet among some people. This is a myth so ignore it. There is no logic backing this myth. In fact, many home improvement stores sell specialty products to keep a throw rug from wrinkling if placed on top of carpet. You may find remnants you can also use to throw over your carpet at any carpet outlet.

If you own hardwood floors but do not have the money to have them refinished, consider investing in an inexpensive and large throw rug or two to improve the appearance of your flooring. Many rugs are easily laundered in a large washer, so you do not have to pay expensive dry cleaners to clean them.

If you go to a traditional store to buy throw rugs or carpets, you will find they are very expensive. Instead, go to eBay.com or other auction sites and see if anyone is selling oriental rugs or similar pieces like carpet-runners, which you can place throughout your home. Look for those with little wear and tear. These are items you can change any time you want to give your home a fresh look. You can even change them seasonally to improve the ambience in your home.

You can also look into ethnic or small novelty shops, because they often sell hand-woven rugs very inexpensively (surprisingly). You can get a throw rug made of soft wool or similar materials to cover almost the entire surface of a small room for \$100 in some cases.

You can also check out second hand stores for used rugs or garage sales. One person's garbage may be another's treasure. Here are a few extra tips for improving the look and feel of your floors:

- **Use dim lighting if you want to hide stains or a worn carpet.** Nothing makes a stain stand out more than direct exposure to the sun or a bright light. Think about the lighting used in dressing rooms. It always makes us look our worst. Have sympathy for your carpets and provide proper, reflective light.
- **Avoid exposing wood floors to direct sunlight or spills, as this may warp the material.** If you do spill something on the floor, be certain you wipe it immediately with a dry cloth. Find something to shade your floors if they are exposed to sunlight during certain times of the day.
- **Consider a “no shoe” rule in the house to keep your floors looking fresher longer.** Most people track in too much dirt from outdoors when

they wear their shoes inside the home. You can have a set of slippers ready to wear in the home if you prefer keeping your feet warm.

- **Focus on decorating other areas of your living space, and placing objects up high on the walls so people are less likely to look at your flooring, and more likely to look at your strategically placed hangings, plants or other items.** For example, you can place pictures throughout your home high above the flooring so people immediately look at the pictures rather than stare at your floor. If you have a huge statue on your floor, you will attract attention to your floor. Again, this is nothing more than a common sense tip to improve the appearance of your home.
- **Consider snap-in “fake” hardwood flooring.** Many home improvement stores sell do-it-yourself hardwood flooring. It may not be made of the same material old-school flooring is, but it can work equally well. You can even buy “snap-in” flooring you literally snap into place, so you do not have to hire an expensive consultant to install your flooring.
- **Keep in mind some flooring is less expensive than others; cork flooring for example, and some types of bamboo flooring, add a charming look and appeal to a home, and often cost less than other hardwoods like oak.** They maintain the same durability and often last 20 or more years, so it is worth checking into. Do not buy the cheapest products only, look for those that are durable and will last you a long time. That way you do not have to worry about replacing them often or ever, so you will save money in the long-term. If you sell your home, you can add this improvement in to improve the value of your home.
- **Consider buying wood flooring that is not finished.** You can stain and water seal the flooring yourself to save money. You can also ask a friend to help you do this. This is another instance where trading services comes in handy. And if you do not have a “trade” you can use as a bartering tool, get creative. Try offering someone a night out, offer to watch their children. You might find you are surprised at how easy it is to get help from others when you are open, kind and willing to ask.

Our favorite way to improve the look of flooring without spending a fortune is by using runners in high traffic areas. Often you can buy beautiful runners, long stretches of carpet, very inexpensively. Runners come in many different colors,

styles and patterns. You will maintain your floors and add to the décor of your home.

Remember, replica and laminate wood flooring products often look just as good if not better than the real thing. They are easy to install, and you can accessorize them inexpensively with a few well-placed throw rugs. These are an excellent choice for people that want to improve the interior of their homes without spending a fortune on carpeting.

Accessorizing Rooms with Hangings, Lamps and More

Yet another way to decorate your home elegantly without spending a fortune is to accessorize. Most people over-accessorize. If you want to budget, look for a small selection of quality pieces and if anything, consider “under” accessorizing your home. A few special pieces well placed in your home will prove much more interesting than a home full of multiple cheap ornaments.

Accessories include wall hangings, lamps, vases, paintings, plants and other items that can add a sense of sophistication and peace to a room or your home. You can also add items you make, including dream catchers, paintings or items your children make at school (hang their artwork on the walls). Remember, you want to create a home that provides appeal, but one that also reflects your personality. Put what you like out, and place your accessories in convenient, eye-catching locations.

You can also create a unique appeal by selecting one distinguished item and using it as the centerpiece for the room you decorate. Simplicity is key if you plan to feature an exclusive item in your home.

Let’s say for example you want to decorate your dining area. You first repaint the walls in an elegant color. You then have a dining room table strategically placed in the center of the room. Select one elegant item as the centerpiece for your dining area. This may be a vase for example, that you can fill with fresh flowers.

The tinted walls and centerpiece are going to be the items that stand out.

Tip For Clutter Improvement

Sometimes the best way to improve the appearance of your home and allow room for “decoration” is to remove clutter. Are you a clutter bug? You can easily recognize a clutter bug. They have piles of paper stacked on top of the refrigerator.

Drawers crammed full of needless items. Knickknacks throughout the house... the list goes on. Instead of fretting, why not build or buy an inexpensive cabinet, one that is aesthetically pleasing, and “store” your clutter there?

This is a simple way to hide clutter, which always makes a room or home look ten times better. Eventually, if you have time, consider removing as much clutter as you can. Some people pile their clutter in their garage. What happens if you move to a small place? Try setting aside one day each month to look through and remove the clutter you have in your home. You will find you feel energized for doing so, and improve your home’s utility and appearance.

If you own cabinets, you can always have them refinished and shined to help them look their best, or even add inexpensive handles to improve the look and feel of your cabinets. Most people automatically assume they have to replace something that looks worn. Very rarely is this the case. In fact, worn items that receive a little TLC often lend an added appeal to a room because they are quaint.

Remember, when making over a home, often less is more. It is the small details and the personal touches that people most often notice. You can change the light fixtures in your home to add elegance. You can replace the fixtures on a worn faucet to make it look new. These small changes do not cost much but can make a big difference.

The Top Three Changes Everyone Can Make

In this section, you will learn how three simple changes can change the way you feel about your home in a single instant. You can decorate your home easily if you adopt even one of these principles. You can use these changes to decorate a room or an entire home even if they only have a small budget to work with.

First, always invest in paint. Remember, paint is the interior decorator on a budget's best friend. You can use paint in hundreds of ways to improve the way your home looks.

Next, consider removing clutter. You can literally redecorate your entire home just by removing clutter. You may find it surprising just how much an uncluttered area makes a difference.

Last, add one or two key pieces, like artwork you buy at an auction, at a garage sale, or that you make yourself, to decorate a room or your home. Consider for example, family photographs. You can sort through photographs and make collages of family members to adorn your walls.

You can buy inexpensive wooden frames and paint them to create a unique wall hanging for any room in your home. When it comes to budget interior decorating, even when trying to makeover your entire home, sometimes simple changes are the best changes to make. One method many people find extraordinarily beneficial when interior decorating on a budget is the art of Feng Shui. In the next section of this guide, you will learn more about this ancient practice. Find out how to put it to use and save money when decorating your home's interior, regardless of the style or theme you select for your home or living space.

Feng Shui Decorating On A Budget

One of the more popular ways to decorate the interior of a home these days is a technique called Feng Shui. You can hire an expensive Feng Shui expert to decorate your home, or use the simple tools outlined in this guide to create a peaceful and well-decorated home.

Feng Shui is not a mysterious and mystical system. It is a practical, ancient art meant to help people design their living space in a way that promotes positive energy and healing. There are several simple principles you can adopt when decorating your home that will improve the appearance of your home, and possibly your luck, health, wealth and prosperity while at it.

The goal of Feng Shui includes creating a living space that is well balanced. Typically, homes decorated well are balanced, clear of clutter and well designed. They are appealing on many levels to many people, which is why we decided to dedicate an entire chapter to the art of Feng Shui. Some important considerations in Feng Shui include color, which many believe have an effect on emotion, and “flow” or the balance of positive energy in the home.

You will learn more about each of these important aspects in the sections following.

Color and Feng Shui On A Budget

Painting your walls is one way to decorate your home. The colors you select can have a tremendous impact on the way you feel while in your home. Many people, including scientists, believe color affects people different ways. If you want to improve the way you feel AND decorate your home, you have to paint, but you also have to paint using the right colors. You want the colors you select to bring out positive emotions and feelings to create balance in your home.

How do you do that? You consider the way color affects your personality, your spirit, and your like or dislike of a room or place in your home.

Some people for example, respond to dark colors as cool and relaxing, while others find them depressing or anxiety inducing. It is important you recognize the typical responses associated with various colors, and find out how YOU react to color before painting a room or space in your home.

Have you ever walked into an area where you felt especially calm? Did you notice the colors in the place? Start paying attention to color as you go through your day-to-day activities. You may start to notice some colors cause positive responses in you and others negative.

Many feel green and blue for example, are relaxing colors. Red often stimulates people, but this is not always the case. Some people feel the most relaxed when surrounded by deep, rich colors.

Keep this in mind when decorating your home. You also want to think about the kind of environment you want to produce. If for example, you want a lively living area to entertain, but a calm and peaceful bedroom, you may use two different colors in these areas.

Many people find bright colors irritating, so keep this in mind when painting your home. Your home will be the place you find the greatest tranquility, but you will likely also invite others into your home. The color in your room may set the tone for your interactions and engagements with others.

Most people find darker rooms depressing or tiring. This can be beneficial if you want to induce sleep or lethargy, but not good if you want to avoid feeling sad, or inspiring others to feel this way.

Does this mean all dark colors are bad? No. You have to figure out what colors you like and what colors you should avoid when decorating your home. After you do this, you can paint with liberty, knowing you are creating a space you can truly call home.

Popular Colors

If you have an interest in decorating your home using color, here are some popular color selections and their meanings. You can decide to paint your entire home a uniform color, or paint room by room.

Keep in mind that subtle differences in color may have a profound effect on the way you react to color, so be sure you “test-drive” a color before you paint your walls.

You can do this by visiting a local home improvement store and grabbing a few swatches of color. Alternatively, you can buy a small can of the color you think you want and paint a small area, or one wall, and see how you react to it.

- **Red** – if you want to create a passionate environment, one filled with energy, power or heat, red can be a great color. Many people alternate red colors or shades of red with rich cream colors when painting their bedrooms. Keep in mind however, for some red also inspires feelings of irritation or aggression, so be sure to measure your response before painting.
- **Yellow** – this color usually inspires joy, happiness, positive feelings, a sense of clean or freshness, hope, and reminds people of the sunshine. Yellow can also suggest something dangerous or hazardous to some people. You may consider a pale shade to counter this effect.
- **Blue** – this is an excellent color to bring peace and tranquility into any room in your home. It may also serve as an appetite suppressant, so you might consider it for your kitchen if you want to remain fit and trim. Some people find darker shades of blue depressing.
- **Orange** – this color, like yellow, is filled with energy and vibrancy. It is a good color if you want a productive and vibrant living space.
- **Green** – this is also a nurturing color, many find it relaxing. Some believe it brings good luck and for others it symbolizes nature or a more natural environment. However, green can also symbolize “envy” or jealousy, so monitor your feelings around this color.
- **White** – there are many shades of white. If you pick pure white, you may inspire feelings of purity, or you may inspire a “clinical” or hospital like environment in your home, so be weary of the shade of white you use. Many find white a color symbolizing inner peace and a sense of humbleness. In some cultures,

white symbolizes death. Think of the white lily, a beautiful white flower often offered during funerals. Be weary of your reaction and beliefs about this color when decorating.

Make sure you test drive these colors. Look at the colors above. Spend some time with each color. Buy fabrics of these colors and decide what colors you enjoy the best, and what energy they provide you with.

This will help you when you select colors to paint the rooms of your home with.

Placement of Objects in the Home

How you place or where you place objects in your room affects your surroundings. Most people believe it is best to create open spaces where you can walk freely.

More than once, we talked about how important it is to remove clutter when possible. In Feng Shui, the goal of placing objects is to stimulate the movement of energy, called “chi” in any room. This brings positive feelings and prosperity.

Here are some simple steps you can take to create a sensible, practical and useful flow in your living space:

- ➡ Make sure all walkways are open and spacious so you feel you have more space and do not trip on objects.
- ➡ Do not block doors, and ensure they can open freely to allow warmth and prosperity into your home.
- ➡ Avoid clutter in any area of the home as this can create feelings of chaos or an unstructured environment. It can also block positive energy.
- ➡ Try to allow air to flow freely through rooms, using ventilation or by unblocking or uncovering windows.
- ➡ Avoid placing a bed directly across from a door or mirror as this can interrupt your natural sleep cycle or rhythms according to some.
- ➡ Make sure mirrors reflect positive or aesthetically appealing objects, so when you stare at them you feel relaxed and calm.
- ➡ Use plants to create an environment filled with life and animation, and to provide a sense of calm when working in a hectic environment.

Feng Shui is often very systematic in its nature. People study Feng Shui for years before they master the art of establishing a positive and energetically balanced environment. Just keep in mind your goal is to create a space YOU feel

comfortable in. You may find placing your sofa on one side of a room for example, brings you greater joy than placing it on another.

Always use your intuition when placing objects throughout your home, and chances are you will design your home in a pleasing way. You may find you place objects and move them frequently until you establish a comfortable working environment. This is perfectly normal. You may also find with time you have a need to change the way objects are placed in your home. Do what you feel is right at the time, and you can't go wrong.

Some say when it comes to Feng Shui, it is best to make small changes first, so you can observe how your body reacts to them.

If for example, you paint a room, move your sofa and place a new fountain in a corner on the same day, and feel different, how can you be sure if all or one of these actions caused your feelings?

When decorating and moving objects around your home to improve the flow of energy, be sure you take your time. This is the best way to create a quiet and peaceful environment. If you want, rearrange the furniture in your home and walkways several times, to make sure the interior of your home reflects your true personality, wants and desires.

If you want to learn more about creating a positive and spacious environment, check out a few books on Feng Shui from the library. You can also Google the term and find a wealth of information on the Web.

Expert Design Tips For Beginners

Now that you have a basic understanding of what design is all about, it is time to review some ways to bring your home together. You should always work to create a home that seems balanced. You do not want to decorate your home so that you feel you live in a chaotic environment. You can easily decorate and create positive balance by following the techniques outlined in this section.

You know you can buy inexpensive pieces to furnish your home. You can also mix and match. One key to creating a homey environment is to buy one or two key pieces you like, even if they are expensive, and complement the rest of the area you plan to decorate with simple items that cost much less.

Mixing and matching works well as long as you have some design element in mind. For example, if you want to mix antique furniture with some contemporary pieces, you can do so, just make sure the pieces complement each other in some way, or match the overall style you want to create within your home.

Two Basic Ways to Decorate for Success

If you look at interior design as a philosophy, there are two major ways to decorate. You can keep things clean, simple and streamlined (as one might if they wanted to use the principles of Feng Shui), or you can create a natural, upbeat and abstract environment that matches your personality.

Some people prefer to use exotic or fun pieces throughout their home to create an entertaining and lively environment. Others want to create a peaceful and tranquil environment. Still others buy pieces reflecting their cultural heritage. No one way is the right way, because everyone is different. How you decorate should reflect how you feel and who you are.

You may find you want an exotic theme or style in your bedroom or the family area, but tranquil and balanced in the living or home office area. You can mix and match, though most people tend to stick with one theme or another. Key to your success is your ability to have an open mind, and have fun.

Make sure you do not use too many pieces when designing. If you have the idea to place family photographs along a hallway for example, as a way to decorate your walls, do so, but do it simply. Try using the same frame style for all the pictures you use. If you mix and match too many different styles, you will create a chaotic looking environment.

Candles Décor

Some people decorate with candles and color alone. Candles come in many shapes, sizes, colors and scents. You can buy small tea candles for less than a dollar, or larger candles for \$10.00. You can use candles to accessorize or candle lamps to substitute artificial lighting in your home. If you want an environmentally friendly home, you may want to buy organic candles.

The key to making candles work is finding proper holders for them. These you can find anywhere. You can buy sets of candleholders and use them to decorate an entire home, and save money by investing in more rather than less.

Just make sure if you plan to light candles, you replace them regularly. Tea candles are best used as lighting sources because they are inexpensive. You do not want to buy a \$200 decorative candle and light it, having to replace it monthly. That gets expensive.

On the other hand, you can use the larger piece as décor in your home, and light tea candles to allow a pleasing glow and aroma. Most people find a combination of techniques creates just the right feel and appearance for their home. One word of caution - If you do buy candles, make sure you invest in candles that have safeguards. You do not want to burn down your beautifully decorated home. Always make sure you put candles out when you are done using them.

If you are sensitive to scent, try using unscented candles. Many candles come in powerful scents, so be sure you check the candle's ingredients BEFORE you buy so you do not bring on an allergic reaction when decorating your home.

As you continue to use your imagination and adopt new techniques, you will find new ideas inspire you to change the look and feel of your home. When this happens, go back to your goal-setting list and create new goals for your home. Ultimately, this will allow you to create an expertly designed home any time you want, without spending a fortune.

Final Words

And now our journey must end. Now you have the basic tools you need to decorate the interior of any room in your home, or your entire home, working with any budget. Most of the tips and methods outlined in this guide will save you money. They will also provide you the opportunity to have a hands-on approach when decorating your home.

Make sure you follow the steps outlined in this guide.

- ➡ Analyze your home.
- ➡ Set a budget.
- ➡ Use your imagination.

Ask friends and family to pitch in when decorating your home. Consider trying something new. Look at magazines and pictures and cut out those you like. Then try to reproduce what you see inexpensively. Use your personality when decorating your home, and remember, you can always refurbish that which you cannot buy new.

When you have an open mind and an able body, interior decorating on a budget is possible for anyone. Now it is time for you to get to work. Start analyzing your home and decide what room or rooms you plan to decorate, and then get to work!