

INSTANT LIVING ROOM MAKEOVER IDEAS

BY YANIC SIMARD



1 THE COFFEE TABLE

I find that coffee tables are often too bare, lacking warmth from accessories. You should focus most of your energy here. Collect items from around the home - use a wood or chrome tray and decorate it with a vase or pretty drink pitcher from the kitchen, and fill it with fresh or even artificial flowers. All you need is a few stems of larger-headed flowers like hydrangeas if you decide to go with fresh. Though I'm not the biggest fan of artificial flowers, I must admit there are some great options out there today!

2 "DEAD" CORNERS

Empty angles can be problematic but on the flip side can be easily solved. The trick is to add height, which becomes interest. If you've got a club chair and aren't sure what to put behind it, a tall triangular book case can often be a good solution. Stack books, vases and other accessories at varying heights on the shelves.

3 PILLOWS

Pillows are one of my favourite items of all time - they are an easy method of bringing colour, texture and pattern into a space, and the best part is they are non-committal. You can change them when you're ready for something new; you can rotate them from room to room. You can never have too many pillows. Pillows are evidently great on a sofa or side chair, but throw a couple on

DO YOU WANT YOUR LIVING ROOM TO LOOK NICELY DECORATED, BUT feel like you haven't got the money to do it? Are you tight on cash, and does your home reflect that? I've got five great stylist tips that can create a fully decorated look without having to spend a fortune.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62...



the floor in front of the coffee table or television for a more relaxed, comfortable look.

4 MATCHING FURNITURE

I like when rooms look like they've taken years to put together, even when they haven't. If you've got a furniture set with a matching sofa, loveseat and side chair, try breaking up the pieces and swapping them with other pieces you have in other rooms. If you have a leather sofa in the den, switch it with your matched fabric sofa from your family room. It's all about mixing and matching to create something harmonious, but most of all unexpected.

5 ACCESSORIES

The finishing touches of a room are indefinitely the most important. Accessorizing is the last step upon completion of a room. Instead of taking the afternoon to go out

shopping for these final items, take the afternoon and spend it searching around your home, for items you already have. The key is to try and bring in pieces that relate in colour and texture. You can never go wrong with glass or reflective elements, they will match any décor.

If you decide that you want to bring in a little bit of "new" and only want to spend a little bit of money, then here are a few tips:

- » Set a strict budget for yourself of just \$200-\$300. (You will be amazed at how much you will get for such a little amount of money!)
- » The trick is to spend wisely – don't go over your budget
- » Go to more than one store. My advice is to go to at least three different places, that way you have comparable items to access.



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is the principal designer of the Toronto Interior Design Group. Specializing in residential and commercial projects, Simard often applies his signature high/low and old/new combination design techniques in developing unique designs. Simard has created designs for clients in Toronto, Montreal and Miami, and appears as a regular guest expert on Citytv's *CityLine*. For more information visit tidg.ca.