

BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO YOUR ROOM WITH REDESIGN

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In today's world our lives are filled with busy schedules. As women, we often perform a never-ending juggling act between work, children, school functions, meetings, sporting events, family commitments, social commitments and household duties. We're bombarded daily with media, news, and technology. Sometimes we just can't seem to jump off this fast-paced treadmill that we call living. And the list goes on! At the end of our day we seek out that place of comfort and refuge. For many of us, our home is our refuge - a place to relax and unwind. But what if you aren't comfortable in your surroundings? Maybe your living room is causing discomfort and anxiety because it is cluttered or dated, and doesn't represent the real you. Or you may love the pieces that you have, yet the room feels off kilter or uninviting. Enter -Redesign!

Redesigning a space using what you already have is a quick and inexpensive way to breathe new life into a room. It's using your furnishings, collections and accessories in unique combinations and ways to create a new and celebrated space that represents who you are today. By "shopping" your home, you will find that items you own can perform a different function and also change the entire look of a room. For example: your grandmother's old dresser that has been sitting in the basement for years just might work great as a buffet table in the dining room once it is cleaned up and accessorized with two beautiful lamps and a shimmering glass bowl as an accent piece. The key to redesign is keeping an open mind, tapping into your creativity and having fun!

To get you started, here are some redesign tips:

- Determine the room's focal point and function. Is there a gorgeous lakeside view? A stone fireplace? Does the room have multi-functions?
- Establish a source of inspiration. Maybe you own a particular piece of artwork that reminds you of a fabulous vacation spot, or an incredibly comfy striped chair that you purchased a year ago. Inspirations can be anything and from anywhere. Use your inspiration source to determine the look, feel, and color palette of a room.
- Clear out the room you want to redesign, so you can start with a clean slate.
- De-clutter. Remember the saying: "Less is more." Give yourself permission to throw away or donate items that are no longer useful. The gift of giving always creates a good feeling. Remember, you want to create a room that is comfortable, relaxing and restful. Clutter creates anxiety and discomfort.
- Don't be afraid to add color to your room. Paint is one of the most dramatic yet inexpensive ways to change the look and feel of a particular space. Check out the "oops" paints at your

local paint store for valuable savings: you just may find that perfect hue that was someone else's mistake.

- Update your furnishing by giving them a fresh new look. Painting or re-staining, adding new knobs and hardware, or accessorizing with colorful fabric-covered cushions and pillows can transform an item from trash to treasure. A table top that was in poor condition may just prove to be an inspiration piece once you cover it with old maps, photos, or sheet music. How about creating a one-of-a-kind mosaic using ceramic dishes or pieces of tile? Be sure to use the proper sealer to protect your design.
- Arrange furnishings to create conversation areas. Furnishings in U-shaped or L-shaped arrangements will be comfortable and inviting. Avoid placing all furniture up against walls.
- Add trim and embellishments to existing curtains and draperies, creating an entire new look.
- Add lighting. Proper lighting can change the entire mood or feel of a room. Be sure that your room has general illumination as well as task lighting. Accent lighting can be used to showcase artwork and accessories, and to add ambiance to a space.
- Accessories are considered the finishing touch and have the ability to bring cohesiveness to an eclectic mix of furnishings. They are the icing on the cake! If you have collections, remember to keep them together for the greatest impact.
- Artwork adds visual interest and personality to any room. A good rule of thumb for the majority of pieces is to hang them so the center is at eye level for a viewer who is 5'4" to 5'6" tall. There are exceptions to the rule, but generally this works. If you are lacking in the artwork department, make your own! Interesting fabric stretched over a wood frame, your own abstract painting on canvas (or your children's), old tin ceiling tiles, a beautiful piece of driftwood surrounded by shells and prints of the ocean, Grandma's antique china or Grandpa's old license plates...you get the idea! Anything can become artwork.
- Most important -- have fun! Enjoy the process as well as the end result.

Redesigning a home is like therapy to many. It's about holding on to what is good and what works and letting go of what doesn't. It's about creating a new journey, rediscovering one's self and expressing who we really are within our homes. In our busy, crazy lives, don't we all deserve just that -- a place of refuge that truly speaks of who we are?

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