

10 Tips to Refresh Your Home & Create More Functional Space

Make more room for your family without the expense of buying a bigger home

1. Refresh your room with an improved space plan

Start by removing all furniture, even art from the walls. After a quick cleaning, bring back the largest pieces first and try a new layout – perhaps angling the couch toward the entrance for a more welcoming feel. Allow breathing room around furniture and ample walkways. Consider that some pieces should not come back. Hang art at eye level and keep it scaled with the furniture. Enlist help from a friend or neighbor and offer to return the favor. If you get overwhelmed, hire a designer for an hour for professional direction.

2. Turn an inefficient closet into a more functional built-in

Save valuable floor space in your bedroom by trading your chest of drawers for a more usable built-in storage solution. An inefficient closet can be transformed into an intelligent wardrobe. You can have drawers for your socks and skivvies, a designated space for hangers and even a place for the TV. Pick from a variety of cabinet doors and drawers to match your décor.

3. Repurpose second-hand furniture

With a new coat of paint and stylish knobs, create a unique storage piece from old furniture while keeping it out of the landfill. Fashion an arts-and-crafts dresser or a game storage armoire. Retrofit an old trunk with soft-close hinges to keep little fingers from getting pinched. Paint a checkerboard on an old table to make an instant game table. *Joyful Furniture* in Boulder does the refurbishing for you! joyfulfurniture.com

4. Are your clothes just hanging around?

Here's a clever solution to ease the chore of cleaning out your closet. Turn all your hangers in the opposite direction. After you wear an item, hang it up the normal way. You'll quickly see which items you favor and which items need a new home. (This works for shoes too – start with toes pointed out.) Keep a collection bag in the closet and when it's full, donate reusable items to your favorite charity.

5. Dreaming of wide open spaces

Take a look at your countertops and coffee table: are there piles of mail, random clutter or too many knick-knacks? Designate a mail drawer or cabinet instead of dropping it on the table. Minimizing visual clutter can reduce stress – plus it's good feng shui.

6. Don't let toys dominate your life

Think chic for toys and game storage. Primary-colored plastic bins are not your only option. Textured baskets, vintage metal bins or a charming wooden box are functional and stylish. Sacrifice a lower kitchen drawer to keep toys hidden but accessible to kids. Look for dual-purpose furniture, like a banquette with cubbies below or a storage ottoman, to turn a play-zone by day into a clutter-free adult space by night.

7. Take advantage of unused spaces

Use hollow areas inside your walls or under your stairs as clever storage. Consult your blueprints and have a handyman or contractor open the wall and install a built-in cabinet or drawers to increase your storage capabilities. Even the space between studs can be a built-in magazine rack or niche for your objects d'art.

8. Breathe new life into your foundation


Energetically speaking, the basement is the foundation of your home and your family. If yours is cluttered and disorganized, it can compromise the positive energy going toward your health, wealth, love life, and overall growth. Purge or donate reusable items to breathe new life into both your home and your favorite charity.

9. Add a new splash of color or texture to revive the senses

Rejuvenate a ho-hum space with new paint to create an invigorating, romantic or relaxing mood. Introduce new pillows, art or fuzzy blanket in a fresh color to spice up your living space. If you're bored, your friends probably are too.

10. Make your space YOU-sful

Turn your formal living or dining room into a stylish game room or den. Convert an unused bedroom to that master bathroom or walk-in closet of your dreams. Garages can be cleaned up to house a pool table or craft area. If the original intent of a room doesn't fit your lifestyle, make a space that you will actually use and enjoy.

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