

Hot Decorating Tips: Go From Drab to Fab With These Ideas



Every homeowner eventually wants to make a change, but if you're like many people you haven't a clue where to begin. Just like fashion styles, interior designs change with the times as well. So, if you've been in your home for a long time and are ready to sell or are just ready for a makeover, read on to see if the hottest trends are suitable for your home.

Go ahead and slap a fresh coat of paint on the walls. But don't make it sterile white or boring beige. At the very least use these colors along with some vibrant accent colors on a single wall or two.

"We've gone through an era of everything being very muted and quiet and what we see with the younger generation coming up is that we're really going to use lots of colors. Colors on the walls, color on the furniture such as lime greens, browns, oranges and bright reds," says Dixie Lovejoy, owner of Arizona-based Apple Interior Systems, Inc.

A little paint can make a major change to a home. It's always a good idea to put on a fresh coat or at least touch up the paint before you place your home on the market. It gives a buyer a feeling of cleanliness and that the home has been well cared for over the years.

"Paint is a very inexpensive way to do something new and not have your house seem dated as time goes on," adds Lovejoy.

Think big, but buy less. "People used to buy accessories on a very small scale. In our office, one of our slogans is: bigger is better," says Lovejoy.

She says that means things like pots, statues, fountains, and flower arrangements should all be bigger. So instead of having a lot of knickknack items, you buy less but when you do, you buy big. The idea is to make a statement with your decorating rather than make your home look cluttered.

Accent pillows are a must! The key home décor ingredient that no home should be without gives new meaning to pillow talk. Lovejoy says accent pillows will get your houseguest chatting about your harmonizing décor. "Accent pillows are kind of a key to all design that ties everything together," she says.

Bye-bye sliders. In my opinion, sliding glass doors have always been a bit of an eyesore, but so many tract homes have them. Now, Lovejoy says, sliding glass and even French doors are losing ground. The new alternative creates wide open space even in a residential tract home. Instead, doors that virtually vanish or disappear are appearing in more homes and allowing better access to the great outdoors.

"They actually can slide all the way into a pocket that's built into a wall or stack on top of each other so it becomes one small window on the left or right side but the rest of your house is all open. There are also folding doors that do that," says Lovejoy.

She says the typical narrow three-foot opening on sliding or French doors just isn't suitable for what homeowners want today. "The newest trend is opening up a 12 to 22 or 30 feet of glass. It gives you almost the lanai effect like you have in Hawaii where the inside and the outside all become one," explains Lovejoy.

Of course, this is ideal for homeowners who have big parties or events at their home. "You can just open up your house and the traffic flows inside to outside," says Lovejoy.

Then the outside is decorated much like the inside with fireplaces, couches, chairs, coffee tables, and Lovejoy says even drapes and pictures hanging on the walls on the outside of the house. All of this makes the determining line between the outside and inside of your house disappear.

Furnish your outdoors like your indoors.

"We traditionally don't even use regular patio furniture. We upholster couches and chairs and everything in outside fabric because it's gotten so incredibly intricate. It's not the old red, white, and blue fabric that we used to think of for outdoor furniture," says Lovejoy.

Today, designers are using big patterns made from velvets and even sheer materials on outside furniture which begs the question, "how does this fabric hold up on a couch or chair?"

"We're the toughest market there is with the weather and everything else ... and we're the dustbowl of the world out here but even the moisture that you have in the costal cities wouldn't affect it," says Lovejoy. Need to clean your furniture? Don't hire a professional, Lovejoy says, "You can take a hose to it and wash off the couch or chairs or you can vacuum them just like you do inside so there's really no difference," says Lovejoy.

When it comes to flooring soft is out, hard is in. "I think that we're going away from soft surfaces on the flooring," says Lovejoy.

Traditionally, homes have always had carpeting in the bedroom areas and maybe tile or hardwood flooring in other parts of the house. That's changing to create a better flow between the indoor and outdoor living areas. "That way when you open up your house for entertaining, the patio or the lanai on the outside, or your sunroom, has the same surface as the house so you get that huge expanded feeling," says Lovejoy.

Of course, area rugs are making a huge impact in the marketplace because of homeowners wanting to have some cozy, soft areas on the floor near beds, couches, and fireplaces. Even just a few changes to your home can take it from drab to fabulous with these hot trends.

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