

Redecorate Your Home's Interior

While doing your spring housecleaning this year, you might notice that your décor needs a face-lift. Interior home decorations don't become dated as quickly as fashion fads, but decorating styles do change. Give your home a makeover so it can face the new millennium in style. Those decorating their homes now have options with several currently popular décor styles to suit individual tastes.

Today, home interiors emphasize comfort and reflect personal style. The new interior decorations have evolved from styles popular in the past. Three basic interior decorating styles are now popular:

1. The style of the orient has filtered into many American homes. The Asian look is subtle and blends uniquely with western style. Bamboo night stands and mirror frames enhance Asian theme interiors. Tapestries and framed wall decorations with Chinese calligraphy add an air of Asian magic to a room. Lacquered furnishings suggest a strongly eastern influence. Try placing a treasure chest with a lacquered lid at the foot of your bed. And you don't have to use the traditional black and red color scheme to accentuate Asian style. Try a more refined color scheme with your oriental pieces such as shades of gray and green.
2. The French country style, which rarely goes out of fashion, is the antithesis of minimalism. To achieve the look, you need heavy, dark wood, ornately carved furniture that curves in eloquent lines. Accessorize with fringed and tasseled pillows in rich, dark colored fabrics such as velvet and chintz. Contrast rough and refined textures; so try hanging silk fabric curtains on iron curtain rods. The look also embraces painted floors.
3. Modernism, first popular in the 1950s, creates the sleek, almost classical look so appealing to city dwellers. Clean lines characterize the style. Modernistic sofas are elegantly square, not boxy. Chairs have 'S' curve backs. Buy this furniture upholstered in richly simple fabrics such as brushed velvet and textured cotton of earth tones or retro acid hues. Accentuate the streamlined furniture with mirrors, coffee tables, end tables and other accessories in strong geometric chrome and glass shapes.

Whichever style you choose, accentuate it with popular fabrics and materials. Today's interior designers use stainless steel, cork and chrome. Rather than ruffles and frills, simplicity is key. Coarser textures and open weaves such as rattan and wicker are popular. Also try woven sisal rugs and twig furniture. Leather, suede and damask lead other fabrics in the current popularity contest.

Fashionable Furnishings

You can now mix antiques or older furniture with modern pieces that blend together. This is relatively easy because much of the furniture manufactured today recalls an earlier time period. Try finding pieces made of the same material.

Some modern day classics have emerged, which include: white, slip covered sofas; club chairs, first popular in the 1950s; armless chairs; anything wicker; twig furniture; casual, low-slung coffee tables; and oversized ottomans.

Other popular modern day furniture includes: classic art-deco easy chairs; plump and curvy bombé chests; wheeled cocktail tables; bamboo nesting tables; coffee tables made with wooden tops and cast-iron legs; tall, rectangular dressers with many different sized drawers; oversized leather chairs seamed together with iron studs; lightly stained or washed wooden chairs; and chaise lounge chairs or fainting couches.

Couture Color Schemes

Gray is a popular in the home decorating market. It is the new "it" color, and all shades are popular, from charcoal to silver. Gray complements many colors and wood tone finishes. It is both antique and modern, which fits all current decorative styles.

Blue never fades in terms of style and taste. For a variation on the old standby, try denim colored wall paint, which can transform any room into a designer showcase. Try combining blue with purple to replace the now passe combination of purple and chartreuse.

Orange and lime citrus colors combine to make one of this season's hottest decorating colors schemes. This combination especially accentuates the 1950s modernism.

And all shades of white and ivory are modern day classics.

If you've recently decorated your home with a color that is now considered dated, try accenting that color with one of today's popular shades. Enough accessories in the new color can overpower the more passe look and make your room fashionable once again.

Trendy Treads

Light-washed and painted wood floors have become popular. Try painting a black and white parquet check design over your kitchen's wood floor.

If you prefer to cover your floors, try replacing the formerly popular painted floor cloths with Tibetan rugs. And don't forget that sisal and other heavily textured rugs are also stylish.

À La Mode Accessories

Accessory trends include using jewel-tone tiles in kitchens and baths. Try replacing the wood framing around your kitchen window with various jewel-toned tiles. Also, use ticking for curtains, pillows or sofa slipcovers. Ticking is the often blue-and-white striped fabric used on older mattresses.

Lampshades made of white, paper-thin material or even thick paper help spread luminescent light throughout a room. The paper shades transform into sculpture when illuminated with a light bulb. These indoor luminaries are very chic. Scented candles and Amaryllis flowers are both inexpensive and stylish home accessories.

