

A modern bedroom interior with a bed, a chair, and plants. The room features light blue walls, a white bed with pink pillows, a wire mesh side table, a glass display cabinet, a wooden chair with a white fur throw, and various potted plants including a cactus and a monstera. A large black triangle is on the left side of the image.

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A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO
Decorating your first home

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I'm just going to say it: moving into a new place is hard work! So many times, we'll look through Pinterest and tag a best friend in a photo of what we wished our room actually looked like and then we get too overwhelmed to start the project. Sound familiar?

When you've decided to makeover your space, where do you begin? Maybe you're thinking, "I'm ready to get a real sofa but, I'm on a budget and I have NO idea where to start!" My friend, you are in the right place. Without breaking the bank, let's make a plan to transform your room.

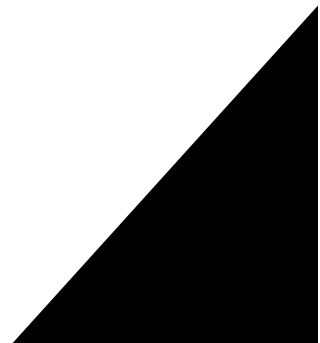
Why does design matter?

The way I see it, there are three reasons for design: functionality, mood and productivity. The way your space functions should be conducive to your living habits. Do you need a spot to roll out your yoga mat? Do clean surfaces help you focus? Surprisingly, these three elements of design go together. By identifying your living habits you can integrate the aesthetics of your space to function according to your needs and positively impact your mood.

Map your space

- How do you use your space? Does your living room double as a home office?
- What are your "must haves"?
- What are the features of your room? Small space, wood floors, lots of light?
- How do you want your room to make you feel?

Answer these questions on the worksheet below to plan your space!



ACTIVITIES How you currently use the space

For example: entertainment area, yoga space, craft room

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

GOALS What you wish you could do in this space

I wish my living room could double as a study/home office!

#1

#2

FEATURES What your room already has

For example: hardwood floors, natural light, modern light fixtures

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

ADDITIONS What needs to be changed or added

For example: tile flooring, curtains, new paint

#1

#2

ESSENTIALS What furniture needs to be in the room

For example: office desk or table, a place to store shoes, 2 bookshelves

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

TOP PICKS Furniture you need now vs buy later

I need a desk to work from home, let's wait on purchasing the bookshelf

#1

#2

MOOD How you want your room to make you feel

I want my living room to make me feel productive, calm and happy!

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

TOP PICKS Write the most important from above

Narrow your focus and identify which feelings are most important to you

#1

#2



Now you're off to a great start! Not only have you identified what you want your room to do but what you want to do in your room... Just a few more tips and you will be on your way to creating a space you will never want to leave!

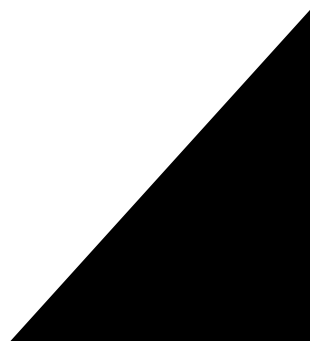
Invest in Essentials

You have identified your essentials in the bottom of each section on the worksheet. Now you know where the majority of your money will be spent. These are usually items you will keep for a long time! Choose basic pieces, think of it as the "little black dress" or "classic white shirt" in your wardrobe, it goes with any accessory and you will keep it for years. Items such as, sofas, dining tables, dressers are some examples of basics and can be taken with you to your next home and dressed up with inexpensive accessories like pillows and throws.

Note: Make sure you are spending money on things you can take with you. Yes, that wallpaper may be really awesome but is it worth it if it can't go with you to your next home?

PRO TIP:

Art can make a huge impact in your space. It is personal and of course can be brought to your next home! I recommend splurging on art you fall in love with. After all, it will be worn on your wall EVERYDAY.



Make small upgrades that pack a punch

Swapping out your light fixtures can make a **huge** difference in your space and is something you can also take with. Just make sure you save the original light fixtures in a box to put back! Also, change out old door knobs or sink fixtures instead of replacing the entire cabinet or sink.

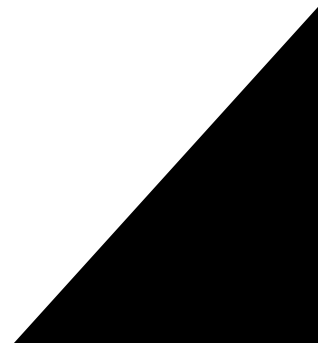
Pick inexpensive pillows, throws and other accessories. It's not worth spending large amounts of money on items you will have to replace soon. It will give you the freedom to swap them out guilt-free when you are ready for a décor refresh!

PRO TIP:

Paint your space...last! There is no easier way to transform a room then adding a splash of fresh paint. Whether it's a pop of pink as a feature wall or bright white all around. Just make sure this is the last thing on your to-do list. It is much easier to match a color to your home furnishings than it is to match all of your furnishings to a paint color.

Pay attention to important details

Measure twice, cut once. Nothing is worse than having a sofa delivered to your apartment to find out it won't fit through your doorway. Use the back of the above worksheet to write down dimensions of your room (length, width, height) as well as your doorways. While out shopping this will come in handy as a go-to reference sheet.



Note: *If you plan to hang curtains in your space measure the top of the window where the hardware will be installed all the way to the floor. There are around four different lengths you can purchase that will fit (the curtain should be just kissing the floor). If the length is a bit off, adjust your hardware accordingly.*

Have you ever considered furniture fabric? Sounds extreme, but it's not! Especially when shopping for essentials it's important to pick a fabric that fits your lifestyle. Do you have dogs? Do you host game night at your house? Perhaps white linen isn't the way to go. If this is the case, pick a fabric that is easy to clean or hides stains well!

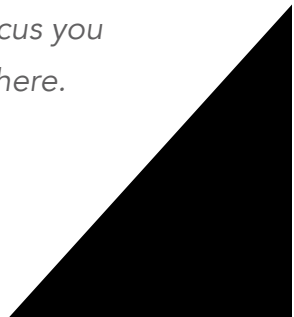
Take Inventory

Attach photos of your existing items to a document. Yes, it is definitely worth the effort to photograph each piece! Having a "mood board" of sorts will help you match new items you are thinking to purchase, with the old.

Go for it! Scroll through our Pinterest boards, gather some inspiration and match your items to the photos you're drawn to. Take notes on the side of your worksheet of what color pallet you like, which style sofa speaks to you, which curtains complement your décor.

PRO TIP:

Take screen shots of the items, fabrics and rooms you discover and love! Attach them to your mood board. This is exactly what interior designers do before they get started executing anything. You have an idea of exactly what you want. With a clear focus you won't get overwhelmed searching through the pages of furniture that are out there.



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Once finished with this process, you're READY TO GO! If you are still feeling a bit stuck, send a message on the contact page with your questions.



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