



Paint


You hear it all the time, but it's true: Paint is the least expensive, most effective decorating change you can make to a room. But, don't just color *within* the lines—think outside the box! Add a chair rail using white paint, then paint above and below using different shades. Paint the ceiling to match the walls, or add crown molding or a tray ceiling where there really isn't one. The possibilities are endless!



Paint

To heighten a low ceiling, paint the walls and ceiling all one color.

A warmer color will bring the walls in for a cozier feeling, while a cooler color will move them out, creating a feeling of spaciousness. This way, there will be no line of demarcation between walls and ceilings. Hanging artwork slightly lower than usual will also give the illusion of more wall space.

A photograph of a room with yellow walls and a white vaulted ceiling. Two white-trimmed windows are visible, one on the left and one on the right. The room is empty, showing a carpeted floor and a white baseboard.

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Paint

Decorating a small space? Light colors will generally make a room feel larger. Light colors with warm (red or yellow) undertones will make it feel a bit cozier than those with cool (blue or green) undertones. But if you really want cozy, don't hesitate to go with deep colors!

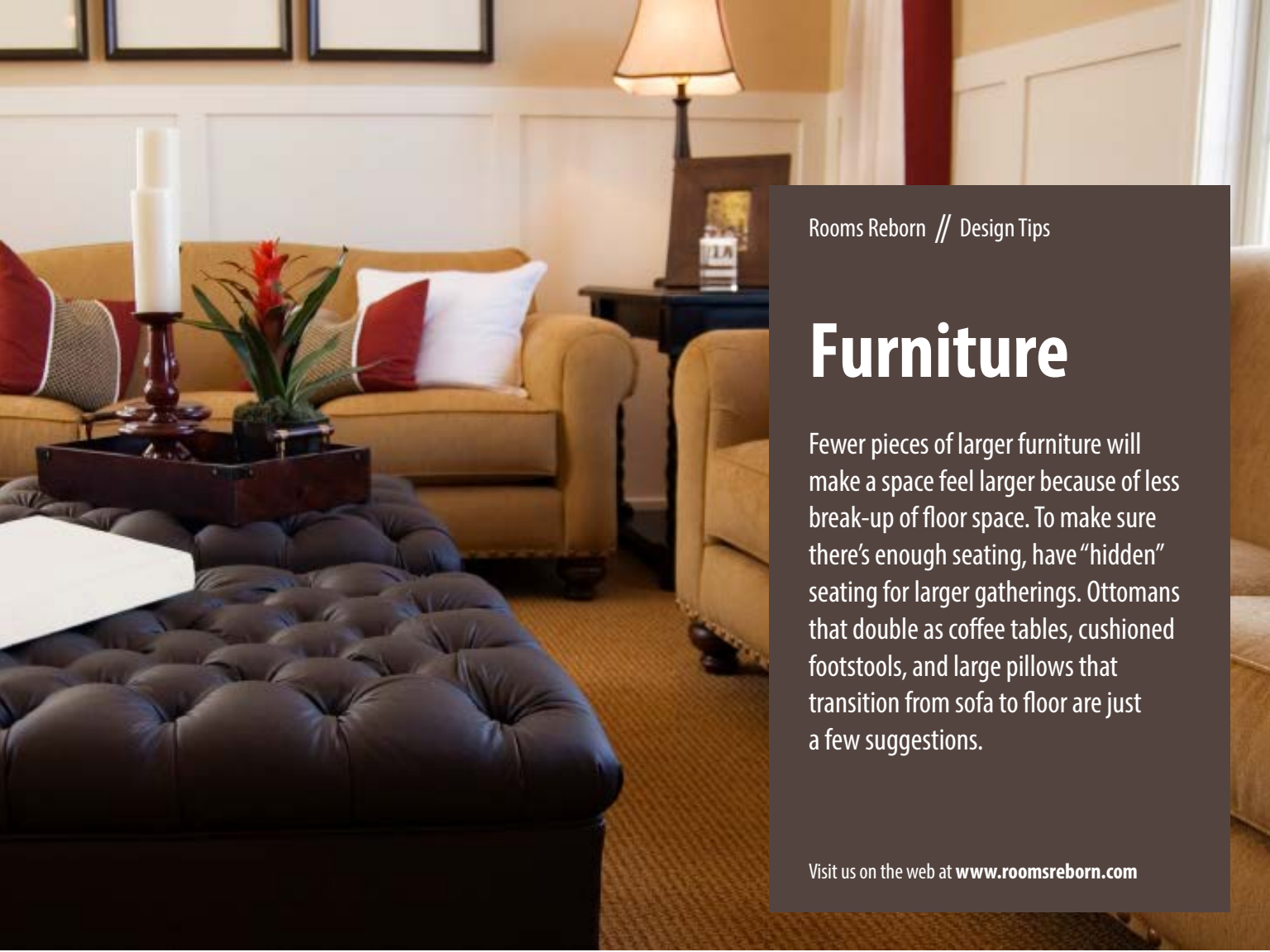
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Furniture

The way your furniture is arranged can determine whether a room is comfortable or dysfunctional. Eliminate the “waiting room” effect by pulling furniture away from the walls. Then arrange the main seating area for comfortable conversation.

Don't forget tables! No one wants to be left holding their cup of coffee!



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Furniture

Fewer pieces of larger furniture will make a space feel larger because of less break-up of floor space. To make sure there's enough seating, have "hidden" seating for larger gatherings. Ottomans that double as coffee tables, cushioned footstools, and large pillows that transition from sofa to floor are just a few suggestions.

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Furniture

Need a side table? Think creatively!

What do you already own that may work perfectly? Just make sure it's the right height so that it's actually useful.





Furniture

Instead of getting rid of it, paint that tired piece of furniture. Black or white is always safe. Or, you can try something brighter to make it an instant focal point.

Change the drawer pulls or handles and it becomes brand-new!

Mantels

Even if you don't use it, your fireplace should be a focal point. Place your most attractive artwork above it, then enhance it with an interesting mantel display.

Just don't accessorize with too many items or with things that are too small! Your mantel needs to make a statement.



Mantels

Don't have artwork that's large enough for your mantel?

Consider using a large accessory to take its place, then add a few similarly themed items to enhance it.





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Lighting

Lighting in a room is one of the most important considerations in room design. Often, we think recessed lighting along with light from the windows (two forms of ambient light) is enough...but it isn't. Even with recessed lighting, a minimum of three down lamps will provide appropriate task lighting while creating a much warmer ambience.

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Lighting

Not happy with your lamp selection? Simply changing the shade can bring an entirely different look to a lamp. Switch shades between lamps or purchase inexpensive shades from HomeGoods or Target for a completely new look. Just make sure the bottom of the shade for a table lamp falls below eye level (preferably at the nose) of the person seated next to it.

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Lighting

Use candle sconces instead of expensive electrical sconces (and save on the electrician as well) in the dining room.

Buy four and hang in pairs on opposite walls in the dining room, then dim the overhead fixtures and light the candles for a cozy, romantic feel.



Kitchens & Baths

Give your kitchen and/or bathrooms a quick update by changing cabinet knobs, faucets and towels. These are inexpensive fixes that can make your dated rooms look like new again.



Kitchens & Baths

Tired of that dull Formica backsplash? Cover it with pre-pasted wallpaper. Pick out a pattern with the appearance of tile for a more traditional look.

Or, try something fun and unexpected for pizzazz.



Bedrooms

Make your bedroom your sanctuary. Begin by replacing your bedding, but rather than going for a “bed in a bag”, mix and match solid colors.

If replacing everything is not in the budget, try a new duvet or even some throw pillows—anything to make the bed more inviting.

Bedrooms

If your office is in your bedroom, consider moving it to a different location. Think creatively about little-used spaces in your home—even small closets may work.

If there is nowhere else to move it, at the very least separate it from the sleeping area with a screen. It's very difficult to relax when work is always calling you.

Bedrooms

Cozy the bedroom by covering the quilt with a duvet made from sheets purchased as seconds or close-outs.

Simply stitch 3 sides together, then either sew Velcro or coordinating ribbons of heavier fabric to the fourth side to be tied together to keep the quilt in place.





Windows

When it comes to window treatments, less is usually more. But, that doesn't mean they have to be boring.

Simple panels bring a softness to any room. Add pretty trim—fringe, beading or something you just love—to give them a custom look. Use fabric glue to hold it in place down the side, across the top or along the bottom for an instant change.

Or, try banding your window treatments down the sides with a coordinating fabric. If that's too difficult, then simply pull them back with a pretty fringe trim easily purchased at a fabric store.

Windows

Make sure you hang your window treatments at least 6 to 9 inches above the window molding to elongate the appearance of the windows. If that's not possible, then the rod should be just below the crown molding.

Panels should stack back so that the leading edge rests at the start of the window pane.

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Accessories

Change pillows to go with the season. Deeper hues and softer fabrics prepare you for longer winter evenings, while lighter weight fabrics and bright colors brighten your décor for Fall. Don't forget to add pillows to the furniture on your deck or porch.





Accessories

Not enough artwork in your home?

Copy a favorite picture from a magazine, enlarge it if necessary and mat and frame it for a new piece of wall art.

Or, blow up black and white photos and frame in either solid black or white for a bold look.

Accessories

Arrange your collectibles around your home so that like items are together. Use trays to add cohesion and group anything that makes you feel good!

Special gifts, souvenirs, or anything else that warms your heart will always make a nice arrangement. Just remember—less is more. Only put out a few then change them periodically for a whole new look.





Accessories

Pay attention to the reflection when hanging mirrors. When hung above fireplaces, they may reflect the wall or ceiling from across the room—not a pretty sight. A better choice is to hang them where they reflect something pleasing.

Mirrors are also wonderful light reflectors, so place one across from a window or other light source to brighten and expand the space.

Accessories

When displaying accessories, think in terms of odd numbers. Even though less is more, regardless of the number of items you display, an odd number is always more pleasing to the eye.

