

ARTIFICIAL PLANTS

Are you tired of your present home décor? Sooner or later, that couch you loved ten years ago, now looks old, frayed and dated. Ditto on the kitchen curtains and the sterile white walls everywhere you look. You want a fresh look, but your budget for a redecorating project is modest. Don't despair. With a few inexpensive changes and a little planning, you can have a new look you'll love! Read on to learn of one of the highly effective and well-kept secrets of professional decorators.

A fresh coat of paint all around in colors that reflect your personality will work wonders. Perhaps colored levelors, to replace those dowdy curtains, will jazz up the the kitchen, allowing light and privacy at the same time. This is a good start. Now how can you infuse the scene with lively accents without breaking the budget? Any décor benefits from a few strategically placed plants. Plants lend a soft, cozy feeling that creates an inviting ambiance. Restaurants, coffee houses and corporate offices often use plants just for this reason.

There is a drawback to plants - they require maintenance and a green thumb for long-lasting success in a decorating scheme. Consider artificial plants as a low-cost, low maintenance solution. Technology is now so advanced. Quality artificial plants are so real looking, you'd need to put on your glasses for a close inspection to tell the difference between the faux plant and its fertilizer-gobbling counterpart.

With artificial plants, you needn't engage a neighbor to water your friends when you go away on vacation. Weekend plans won't be disrupted with watering, trimming, fertilizing and repotting tasks. Yet your home's appearance suggests you're a master gardener with decorating flair.

Among the many types of artificial plants available, one stands out as superior in appearance. Artificial plants made of silk are almost indistinguishable from the real McCoy. They're a bit more costly than artificial plants made of plastic, but are truly lovely and they never die! A hanging fern in the bathroom appears as natural as the real thing. Any gardener will tell you that ferns need lots of moisture and typically thrives in a bathroom setting where steam and moisture keep it hale and hearty. An occasional spray with a spritzer bottle enhances this illusion.

A tall umbrella tree in the living room gives lots of value for your decorating bucks. Placed next to your couch by your reading lamp on the end table, this artificial plant makes your couch a desirable place to kick back with a good book. Add a nice throw blanket and a few new pillows and that old couch is back

in business!

Just as real plants can be dressed up with backlighting, your backlit artificial tree can provide a romantic highlight. String some lights through its branches for a stunning effect. If your budget is very tight, you can always add to your artificial plant collection later. So there you have one of the best tricks in the pro decorator's arsenal!