



## Easy Room Transformations

5 ways to improve your room with just one easy change.

by **Maryann Hammers**

Have you ever wished you could wave a magic wand to spiff up a room, modernize it or make it brighter and lighter? Well, there's no magic wand, but here's good news: You don't need to totally redecorate. One quick switch can completely change a room's look, feel and mood. Here are five easy ways to instantly transform a drab ugly-duckling room into a stunning swan of a space.



Light changes how everything else is experienced. It's an instant game changer. *Photo courtesy of Interior Makeovers, Inc.*

### Five Fast Fixes

Choose one, all or any combination of these changes to quickly and affordably transform a room in your home:

1. Paint an accent wall in the room.
2. Create a "collection" of three or five similar pieces of art or keepsakes.
3. Change out your old lampshades for newer, more modern ones.
4. Buy throw pillows in a hot new color like turquoise.
5. Replace your old cabinet and drawer pulls with new hardware.

### 1. Paint Just One Wall—or All of Them

For the most impact with least cost, paint a focal or accent wall or an entire room. "Wall color is the most significant element of a room. It envelops, defines and showcases the contents," says Sam Jernigan, owner of Renaissance Design Consultations in Northern California. In choosing paint color, think about contrast. "If your sofa is off-white, add drama with a deep hue behind the sofa. But if you want a softer Zen space, you can minimize contrast and go for ecru, light taupe or soft gray."

### 2. Rotate Your Artwork

If your paintings, pictures, portraits and prints have been in the same spot so long they're gathering dust, you probably don't enjoy—or even notice them anymore. (This also goes for smaller photos, souvenirs, vases, statues, etc.) Give new life to artwork and keepsakes by swapping them around. "Gather similar pieces together in sets of three or five," suggests architectural interior designer Lori Gilder, owner of Beverly Hills-based Interior Makeovers, Inc. Group by artist, theme, color, material or another unifying element. And presto—you have an instant eye-catching collection.

### 3. Experiment with Lighting

"Light changes how everything else is experienced. It's an instant game changer," says New Jersey design consultant Paige Rien. Transform a room's mood with dimmers, uplights, and colored glass or sheer textile lampshades. More ideas: Add wall sconces for instant sophistication or hang a chandelier for a touch of glam. Update older lamps with modern barrel or drum-shaped shades in a trendy pattern or color.

### 4. Give Your Furniture a Facelift

Can't afford new furniture just yet? Achieve the same effect with slipcovers, a colorful, cozy throw and toss pillows. "New pillows in fun patterns or colors, like turquoise and citrus tones, will turn an outdated sofa into a chic statement," says Kate Hart, a Philadelphia home-staging and design expert. Want your end tables or side chairs to match the fun new look? Grab a can of paint. "Choose a high-gloss paint for added shine, in a whimsical color, such as orange or purple," Hart says.

### 5. Accessorize Your Kitchen

Remodeling may be out of the question, but you can instantly update your kitchen with a few quick fixes. Start with new cabinet pulls in daring colors or shapes. "My favorites are irregularly shaped crystal knobs in aqua and sleek tubular pulls in Lucite. These looks bring a hip, rock-star look to your cabinetry with minimal investment," says New York City interior designer Marlaina Teich. If you're moderately handy, consider a tiled backsplash to add richness, texture, and style. With new peel-and-stick adhesive tiles, the project is easy enough for the average do-it-yourselfer.