SINGAPORE RENOVATION CONTRACTORS AND MATERIAL SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION

新加坡装修同业商联会 Renovasi Kontraktor dan Bahan Pembekal Persatuan Singapura

சிங்கப்பூர் சீரமைப்பு ஒப்பந்தக்காரர்கள் மற்றும் $GUIDE\ BOOK\ 2017-2018$



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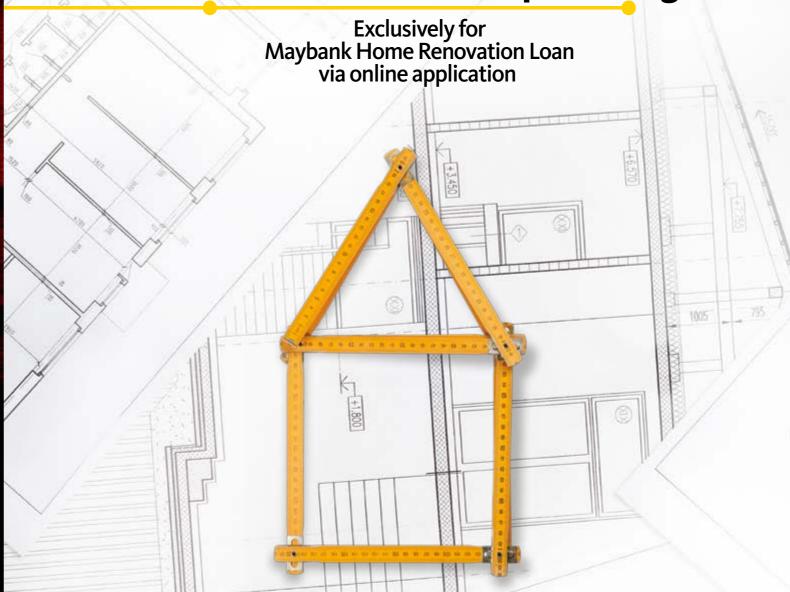






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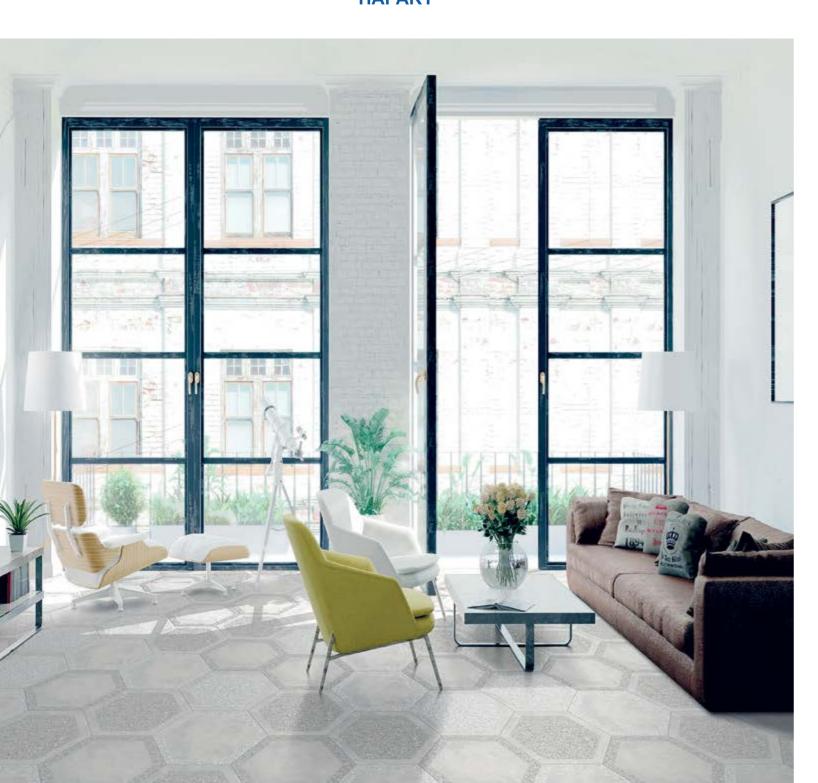
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RCMA - CASETRUST 2017 - 2018



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团结同业, 与时并进 为社会建设和 谐愉悦的家园

Unite our industry, progress with the times so as to create harmonious and pleasant homes

PUBLISHED ON BEHALF OF



Singapore Renovation Contractors And Material Supplier Association

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WOOD WORK MAGIC





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"indoor plants can also provide you with fresher air and serve as a layer of insulation that cancels the noise and regulates the inside temperature"

> "Outdoor elements such as wood and plants could add life to your dining space.



RCMA ACTIVITIES 2016/2017

We have networking and community service activities which you can get involved with at RCMA! Come along, meet new friends and perhaps learn a new skill@TA Hub! There really is something for everyone.



RCMA SPRING FESTIVAL GET-TOGETHER LUNCH ON 22 FEBRUARY 2016



RCMA MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL FESTIVAL GATHERING ON 16 SEPTEMBER2016 @ THE BRITISH CLUB

HIGHLIGHTS



LAUNCH & PRESS CONFERENCE OF 2016 SINGAPORE RENOVATION GUIDEBOOK ON 6 FEBRUARY 2016

COMMUNITY SERVICE



AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE, RCMA CONTRIBUTED A SPEAKER ON RENOVATION TIPS FOR THE BTO FAIR @ CANBERRA ON 30 JULY 2016





RCMA SPEAKER ALSO SPOKE AT THE BIGGER SCALE 2ND BTO FAIR @ CANBERRA HELD ON NOVEMBER 5 2016

RCMA NEW SECRETARIAT OFFICE

RCMA is excited to announce that RCMA's secretariat will relocate to the new secretariat office at TA Hub (Trade Association Hub) at Jurong Town Hall at 9 Jurong Town Hall Road, which has shared facilities (collaborative lounges, auditorium, theatrette, meeting and training rooms etc) available as a new way for RCMA management committee leaders and ordinary

members to get involved and manage their organization!

The modern facilities are there and up to us to make good use of them.

Are you ready to engage RCMA and to network, learn and contribute to the community?





2016 - Official launch and press conference of CaseTrust RCMA Joint Accreditation Scheme and 2016 Singapore Renovation Guidebook.

Distributed 2016 Singapore Renovation Guidebook to public at HDB Sales Department, HDB Branch Offices, Town Council Offices, BCA Academy, etc.

Implementation of Renovation Deposit Performance Bond by CaseTrust Accreditated members. RCMA Secretariat is scheduled to be re-located to Level 4, Trade Association Hub (TA Hub) at 9 Jurong Town Hall Road, Singapore 609431 from 1st January 2017.

2015 - Publication of CaseTrust RCMA 2015 Desktop Calendar.

2014 - Signing of MOU between Case and RCMA on the establishment and implementation of CaseTrust and RCMA Joint Accreditation Scheme for Renovation Businesses.

2013 - Continuation of Skills training course on demolition of concrete structures in HDB flat.

2012 - Pilot run of Skills training course on demolition of concrete structures in HDB flat.

2011 – Held a legal talk addressing common problems faced by contractors.

2010-2011 – RenoQuote is now available on MyHomeTown.sg, a Singaporean portal which aims to increase the 'Kampong' spirit in our heartlands.

2009 – RCMA becomes an Approved Training Organisation (ATO) under the National Skills Recognition System (NSRS).

2009 – Assisted with implementation of RenoQuote, Singapore's first online renovation quotation service and directory search.

2006 – Integrated collaboration between City Gas and RCMA for a programme to encourage more HDB homeowners to use City Gas.

2001 – RCMA's 20th Anniversary Dinner Celebration was held on 7th January 2001 at the Neptune Theatre

Restaurant, entertaining as many as 100 tables of guests including representatives from RADAC, SHDC, Singapore Building Materials Suppliers Association and CLSMA. It was covered & reported by LianHe ZaoBao. RCMA also published its 20th year anniversary commemorative publication.

2000 – RCMA seminar: Rights and liabilities of renovation contactors.

2000 – Celebrating 'Chinese New Year Dinner' at Lucky Restaurant in Toa Payoh.

1999 – Opened dialogue between RCMA and CASE, RADAC, People's Association and Bt Purmei Community Club. Total of over 400 participants.

1998 – RCMA-led proposal that homeowners be allowed to pay 30% of renovation costs upfront and the other 70% only when old flats are sold.

1996 - RCMA corporate website formally launched.

1995 – Appealed to MAS to relax differentiation between personal loans and renovation loans. Appeal was successful.

1990 – Spearheaded push for publication of the Singapore Directory of Accredited Renovators. Development of standard contract between renovators and homeowners. RCMA/RADAC cooperates with 12 banks to introduce the Reno Loan Scheme. 1988 – RCMA officially formed.

1985 – RCMA participated in the seminar on "The Development of Renovation Industry." It was covered & reported by LianHe ZaoBao. Participated in the formation of the Renovation and Decoration Advisory Centre (RADAC).

1984 – Spearheaded legislation that allowed only qualified renovation contractors to be registered as HDB Approved Contractors.

1983 – Successfully appealed to Government to allow homeowners to use CPF for payment of home renovations.



RCMA IS A DYNAMIC ORGANISATION CONCERNED WITH THE FURTHERANCE OF OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND THE INDUSTRY IN GENERAL.



COME JOIN RCMA!!!

ENQUIRY

Singapore Renovation Contractors And Material Supplier Association

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MESSAGE FROM DR SKY TAN

PRESIDENT



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I feel honored to be supported and elected as the President of RCMA for 2017/2018.

It has been almost 37 years since RCMA branched out as a group of voluntary renovation business owners who have strong passion and dedicated to help and solve related renovation issues and they have been upholding the RCMA public image and brand as well.

I am proud of our RCMA members who have come a long way with vast renovation experiences to share and contribute to the association and our new management committee is committed to continue to challenge ourselves and innovate further as we believe in uplifting the renovation standard by putting the best renovation practices in the interior design and renovation industry. Last year, we have collaborated with CASETRUST of CASE to launch a CaseTrust and RCMA joint accreditation scheme for renovation business in which home owners will be insured with an insurance bond guaranteeing a 100% pay-back on their down payment.

Over the past one year, as part of RCMA's member corporate social responsibility (CSR), RCMA has also worked with grassroot organizations and CASE to share the best effective renovation tips and knowledge with the homeowners during their BTO road shows and other renovation workshops as well as organized by the grassroots organization across the country.

Over and above all these key initiatives and efforts, RCMA has taken bigger steps and evolved by compiling a yearly Singapore Renovation Guidebook and co-organize the 2017 Asia Pacific Furniture Fair (APFF) to showcase the most modern and hive interior design concepts and ideas for homeowners.

Our Singapore Renovation Guidebook has been very successful and created a lot of awareness and interest from homeowners and I strongly encourage other related

renovation contractors who have not joined RCMA, to be a member as we need to grow the association to an effective trade group to enjoy the government grants and better plan for different productivity improvements and overseas business expansion programs accordingly to their needs. Our immediate Past President, Mr Tan Chim Hoon deserve a special mention for his past 4 years of commitment and great efforts as the President of RCMA. It is with his years of passion and perseverance that bring him to what he is today as a very influenced renovator in the renovation industry. A special word of thanks to Mr Tan!

I would like to sincerely thank Mr Dean Lim, Ms Mary Mark, and other committee members for their dedicated hard work in this association despite of all their busy schedules.

This year mark as a very important year for the association as we have taken a further step in co-organizing the Asia Pacific Furniture Fair 2017 as a first ever joint association exhibition and we believe in putting our strength together to scale it to a greater height.

I would like to thank all members and seniors who have guided and assisted me during my difficult times to tenure as President of this association.

Special thanks to all executives and friends in housing related ministries such MND, departments such HDB, BCA, BCA Academy, agencies such as WDA. SPRING, and organizations such as Town Councils, RADAC, CASE, SCCCI for their whole-hearted support and constant source of inspiration.

Thank you everyone for giving me this great opportunity to serve you all as President, RCMA.

Wishing you all a happy and fruitful 2017.

Dr Sky Tan President 新加坡装修同业商联会 陈锦龙博士 会长



会长献词

我很荣幸获得会员的支持并当选为RCMA 2017/2018年度会长。

RCMA已经有近37年历史,刚开始时是一群满怀热情的自愿装修商要致力于帮助和解决装修过程中发生的相关问题,并坚持维护RCMA的公众形象和品牌。

我为RCMA会员感到骄傲,他们与本商会共同分享广泛和悠久的装修经验,并为商会做出贡献。 我们新的理事员会致力于继续挑战自我,进一步创新,因为我们相信提升装修标准。我们与 CASETRUST 合作推出了一个CaseTrust和RCMA联合认证计划,适用于装修行业,其中屋主将得到一份保险保单,保障他们首付装修款,能百分百原款退还。

过去一年,作为RCMA的企业社会责任(CSR)的一部分,RCMA还与居民基层组织和消协合作,在BTO路演和其他装修工作坊期间与屋主分享最有效的装修技巧和知识。

除了所有这些主要举措和努力,RCMA已经采取了更大的步骤,并通过每年编辑和出版新加坡装修指南,并与SFA(新加坡家具商会)共同举办2017年亚太家具展(APFF)展示最现代和流行室内设计概念和想法。

新加坡装修指南非常成功,受到许多屋主的欢迎。还没有加入RCMA的其他装修相关同业,请参

加为会员,因为我们需要把商会发展成为一个有效的商团,争取政府的援助并更好地计划不同的生产力改善计划和海外业务扩展计划,以配合会员的需要。

前任会长陈振云先生特别值得我们称许,因为过去4年,他担任RCMA的会长,付出巨大的担当和努力。这是他多年的热情和毅力,使他今天成为装修界的一位非常有影响力的领袖。特别感谢陈先生!

我谨真诚地感谢林福兴先生, 麦凤仪女士和其 他理事成员, 他们在忙碌的公司经营时间表, 还 尽力为本商会辛勤工作。

今年是本商会的一个非常重要的一年,因为我们已经采取了进一步的步骤,共同组织2017年亚太家具展,作为第一次联合协办的展览会,我们相信我们联合的力量,能把它扩大到更高的高度。我要感谢在我困难时期,指导和协助我担任本商会会长的所有会员和顾问。

特别感谢所有相关部门如MND,机构如HDB,BCA,BCA学院,WDA,SPRING,以及诸如市镇理事会,RADAC,CASE,SCCCI等组织,他们给RCMA全心全意的支持和不断的灵感源泉。

谢谢大家给我这个机会作为RCMA会长,为您服务。

最后,祝大家,生意兴隆,财源广讲。

2017-2018

RCMA —

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

新加坡装修同业商联会理事会成員



OUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Front row from left to right: 前排, 左至右:

MR RANDY TAN (Asst. Treasurer), MR CARLSON TAN (Treasurer), MR DEAN LIM (Vice President), DR SKY TAN (President), MDM MARY MARK (Hon. Secretary), MS CANDY NG (Asst. Secretary), MR KELVIN LIM (Vice President).

Back row from left to right: 后排, 左至右:

MR JOHN FOO (Committee Member), MR RICHARD SOON (Committee Member), MR NELSON LEOW (Committee Member), MR HENRY GOH (Committee Member), MR YAP CHONG KONG (Committee Member), MR GARY WEE (Committee Member), MR ANDY TAN (Committee Member), MR RUSSELL CHIN (Asst. Secretary).

MESSAGE_____

新加坡装修同业商联会 陈振云 前会长



光阴似箭,今年是本会更换新领导层的一年,新团队是一群在装修界有经验,有干劲,肯为我会付出,年轻有为的团队。相信在他们的领导下,本会将以新思维,新方法配合新时代发展,为社会做出贡献。

今年,本会在中华总商会的领导下,在 裕廊东设立新会所,会员们出钱出力, 不动用公会一分钱,把会所装修起来。 新会所今后对会务活动,会员交流意 见,共用设施都很方便。更可邀请专家 学者为大家讲解问题,指点迷津,联络 感情,增进认识等等。

去年,我会在大家的努力下,出版了 2016 Singapore Renovation Guidebook (2016年新加坡装修指南)。内容除了同 业们的装修设计理念,有关机构,如建 屋发展局,建设局,消协,装修与装饰 理事会,新加坡家具商会,材料商公会 等等兄弟团体,纷纷刊登有关信息及指 导,更丰富了指南内容,促进成为一本 全面的装修指南。 2015年,当时是副会长,现任会长的陈锦龙的带领下,经过两年时间与消协谈判,磋商,签下意向书,推出本会与消协的"装修商认证计划",内容包括首期押金保险,加强消费人对装修商的信心,希望同业能参加,从中获益。

新加坡装修同业商联会成立于1980年, 今年已是37岁了。

这些年来,不被历史淘汰,能在装修界树立领导地位,团结装修商,无论遇到什么困难,本会理事都能因公忘私,义不容辞去解决难题。这种大公无私,牺牲小我,完成大我的精神是我会一路来的宗旨,获得同业们的称赞,也是我会37年来能保持名誉和信任的原因。

希望新一届理事能保持这种精神, 能"青出于蓝而胜于蓝"。

祝我会会务蒸蒸日上! 精诚团结! 众志成城!

陈振云 前会长

新加坡装修同业商联会 麥鳳儀 秘书长



2017年是一个多事之年。美国新总统 新上任一开始动作就不停,引发世界 各地不安,担心影响世界经济,各 贸易和就业情况。个人消费会变得谨 慎。但话说回来,新房或旧房房居 底,房子是我们长久,日夜居房居 来说,房子是我们长久,有有的 大方。应该摆设的,在是要有,应该摆设的,不然就对不起我们辛辛苦的 是要有,不然就对不起我们辛辛苦所 以,以不变应万变方为生命的道理。

2017年,在顾问和新理事的挽留下, 我留任秘书长多一届,方便培养新的接班人,我任秘书长10年以上,后浪推前浪,是时候让年轻,充满活力的新理事接棒的时刻,该退的就退,该接棒的就接,是年轻一代,展翅飞翔,远征世界的时候。 前辈创立商会的初衷是以团结同业,与时并进,时代不安,不稳定的时候,更需要企业抱团取暖,众多企业参加商会,商会联手其他商会,甚至国家,向经济繁荣的共同目标迈进。

秘书处是商会的心脏,心脏停止操作,商会就会停止运作。新理事要一步一步接触,接管秘书处的工作,最终完成任务。

我们终于盼到我们自己新的会所。秘书 处将于2017年5月前搬迁到设于9 Jurong Town Hall Road, #04-16, TA Hub, Jurong Town Hall, Singapore 609431 的新会所.

到时,希望理事和会员充分使用新会所 及所处的商团中心的共用设施,完成 大家创立商会的宗旨,团结同业,与 时并进的使命,替国家,贡献在房屋 发展方面,建立一个更优雅的社会。

最后,希望大家精诚团结,众志成城。

新加坡装修同业商联会 陈春华 财务长



新闻报道2017年世界局势动荡,可能出现经济放缓,波及各行各业。

鉴于此,室内设计和装修企业应积极开展应急工作:如开源节流,提高自我提升应变意识,加强同行同业合作,减少不必要成本,和避免不必要花费。

商会是由自愿的会员组成。任何活动都 由会员自愿积极推动和参与。

我希望更多室内设计和装修企业成为 RCMA会员,为更多同行同业提供有效帮助。

政府表示我们国家小,地方小,应走出国门,到海外发展。RCMA希望推动这方面的发展,但缺乏有能力的会员来推动与其他国家的室内设计和装修组织,进行沟通,交流与合作。

我看到装修行业的前辈,前会长辛苦付出,发扬守望相助的精神。

我希望看到会员,理事团结一心勇担责任,以维护装修行业的合理合法利益、同时协助同行同业,化解行业困难,于国家发展之中,产生好会员、好理事、好事、好领导,好客户比比皆是。

我呼吁未参加RCMA的装修行业同行,做好经营防患于未然的意识,及时参加RCMA、团结更多力量、尽最大努力做好维护和发展装修行业的工作!

MESSAGE



SFA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR RCMA SINGAPORE RENOVATION GUIDE BOOK

I would like to extend our congratulations to RCMA on the publication of your second renovation guide.

Based on a common objective to provide the best of services and support to our members, Singapore Furniture Association (SFA) and Singapore Renovation Contractors and Material Suppliers Association (RCMA) have been working closely and collaborating on initiatives over the years, to contribute to the successes of our members.

The RCMA Guidebook is an annual publication with practical and useful updates for our members and the general public. Copies of RCMA Guidebook are

distributed to new homeowners, with the support of Housing & development Board (HDB), BCA and Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE). Standards of fair trading and transparency are kept in check and maintained with the Case Trust RCMA Joint Accreditation Scheme.

For 2017 and many more years to come, we hope that RCMA will forge ahead with more innovations and initiatives to further enhance value for members and customers alike. Singapore Furniture Association is privileged to be working alongside RCMA and play an active role in RCMA's endeavours.

Madam Song Mei Yong President Singapore Furniture Association MESSAGE_____



RENOVATION & DECORATION ADVISORY CENTRE (RADAC) CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE FOR RCMA SINGAPORE RENOVATION GUIDE BOOK

Renovation And Decoration Advisory Centre (RADAC) congratulates Renovation Contractors and Material Suppliers' Association (RCMA) on releasing its 2nd edition of their Association publication.

We applaud RCMA for remaining faithful

to its original trade mission even under today's challenging economy while seizing opportunities to stay relevant to meet the demands of the new generation.

We wish RCMA every success in its endeavours.

Mr Alvin Chia
Chairman
Renovation and Decoration Advisory Centre (RADAC)



MR ANG WEI NENG
ADVISOR FOR RCMA
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR JURONG GRC
MESSAGE FOR RCMA SINGAPORE RENOVATION GUIDE BOOK

The Renovation and Materials Suppliers Association (RCMS) has grown from strength to strength over the past 5 years. In 2016, it was accredited by CASETRUST of the Consumer Association of Singapore (CASE). This means that consumers can have a better peace of mind when engaging with members of RCMA, especially as home renovation is a significant expenditure for most families, particularly young families seeking to renovate their first home.

The second edition of Singapore Renovation Guide Book published by RCMA is another milestone. Since its first edition, the guide book has benefited thousands of families, providing tips on seeking the right renovation contractor and setting right and realistic expectations of home renovation. The second edition seeks to do better and more.

About 25,000 new HDB flats will be completed in 2017. This is in addition to more than 30,000 private homes that are due for completion in 2016/2017. With an increase of up to \$20,000 of government subsidies (or up to \$110,000 in total) for young families buying resale HDB flats, it is highly likely that record numbers of home owners will seek to renovate their dream homes soon. Thus, we hope that home owners will find this guidebook interesting, insightful and helpful. Any feedback is welcome; RCMA always seeks to improve, not wanting to rest on its laurels.

All the best in finding the right partners to renovate your dream home!

Ang Wei Neng Advisor to RCMA MP for Jurong GRC



RENOVATION DEPOSIT PERFORMANCE BOND

Introduction

You would have made a very wise decision if you had signed up a renovation package with a CaseTrust accredited Business. Such businesses have undergone a certification process to ensure that it possesses good sales practices and standards. In line with the Accreditation, the Business has also taken concrete steps to protect your deposit collected by them through the procurement of a CASE directed Insurance Bond. CASE will call on the Bond in the unfortunate event of a failure of performance or unexpected closure of the business. In this instance, the guaranteed sum will be the deposit you have paid.

The key coverages of the bond are as follows:-

- Insolvency, compulsory liquidation and bankruptcy of the Insured organization.
- Death or permanent disability of the Key Partner or Director of the Insured organization rendering it impossible to keep the business financially or economically viable and resulting in the insolvency, liquidation and bankruptcy.

For the purpose of this policy, the meaning, intention and definition of insolvency, bankruptcy and/or compulsory

liquidation shall be defined as the inability to meet their financial and trade obligations as and when they fall due to in the usual course of trade or business.

This Policy shall be activated and claims shall be payable when the insured is unable to fulfill their obligations to their Insured Person for more than 30 days on a continuous basis and where is evidenced that all physical functions of Insured has ceased for more than 30 working days

Objective

CASE launched the CaseTrust Accreditation for Renovation Businesses with a view to allowing committed companies to distinguish themselves by committing to the following standards:

Clear Fee Policies

Clearly articulated and documented policies on fees and fee refund. These must be fully disclosed to their customers

Well-Defined Business Practices and Systems

A redress system with proper and clearly defined dispute resolution mechanisms for the business and consumers. This will include mediation by the CASE Mediation Centre





Well-Trained Personnel

The business with trained sales staff who do not practice unethical sales tactics and are able to provide accurate information regarding the renovation

CaseTrust accredited renovation businesses are also regularly assessed by the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) of Singapore in accordance to BCA's CONQUAS standards.

Having received feedback from the general public in the course of their constant dialogue with the Renovation and Decoration Advisory Centre (RADAC), CASE has implemented the Deposit Protection Insurance scheme in order to boost consumer confidence and improve the industry's image.

The Mechanism of the system

- A master policy will be issued
- The approved limit will be set in the customized system which the business operator will have access to.
- The operator will have to issue a certificate to ALL customers who have paid the deposit
- The limit is on a drawdown basis
- The operator will have to top-up the limit once it runs low
- The operator will not be able to generate a certificate if there is insufficient limit
- The consumer will be able to call for compensation for the unutilized portion of deposit from the insurer (closure of the operator)

Claims handling

- The consumer will lodge a complaint to CASE for utilised portion of the deposit upon Insolvency, compulsory liquidation and bankruptcy of the Insured organization
- CASE will assess the matter and make a decision whether the bond called is valid
- If the bond is valid, AVA will assist to facilitate the issuance of the cheque payment
- The cheque will be issued in favour of the consumer within fourteen (14) working days

Conclusion

Our key focus in arranging the Deposit Protection Insurance Bond is to ensure that Consumers' deposits are appropriately protected in the unfortunate event of a failure by the CASETrust Accredited business.

The approach we take is on a proactive and collaborative basis— we have taken into consideration the interest of CASE, the business operators and most importantly the consumers in all areas of deliberation.

We are confident that consumers will be protected in all possible ways based on the implemented scheme. Our philosophy is to adopt a fully integrated approach to the functionality of the pre-paid system. To ensure that the system will not be abused and to achieve a fair and transparent operating procedures in the industry.



CaseTrust Department, Consumers Association of Singapore

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10 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE RENOVATING YOUR HOME

YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS WILL HELP YOU MAKE BETTER DECISIONS AS YOU EMBARK ON YOUR RENOVATION JOURNEY.

By Jerni Camposano

Whether you like it or not, there will come a time when you need to do a home renovation to update certain rooms or increase the overall value of your home.

However, before embarking on a renovation journey, it helps (a lot, actually!) to ask yourself the following questions:

1. What type of renovation do I plan to do?

Will you just need to repair a crack on the wall? Will you transform your traditional-style kitchen into a contemporary one? Or will you hack an entire wall to make the living room more spacious?

"The three 'Rs' of renovating are worth remembering, not only because they help you plan but they also help you understand what you are in for," says May.

2. Which room or rooms do I want to renovate?

Are you only renovating one room or planning to do multiple rooms? It's important to identify as this might affect the overall look of your home. Unless you are going for an eclectic look, a country-themed kitchen seems out of place in an industrialstyle home. Knowing how many areas to renovate will also help determine your budget.

3. How do I plan to use the room?

Do you plan to use that extra bedroom as a nursery or storage? Will you need an open kitchen so you can see through the living and dining spaces while you cook? Do you like the living room to be a place where you can host gatherings? Answers to these questions will dictate the layout, budget, and other elements needed in the room you're renovating.

4. How should I allocate my renovation budget?

Budget is one of the keys to a successful renovation. "Pay strict attention to your budget and do not let the remodeling project get out of hand. It is easy to get carried away, buying more than you should and improving the home beyond what the resale market for your home will bear," warns William Resch in Tips When Remodeling Your Home. (We've got great insights on how to allocate your renovation budget!)

5. Will these renovation works increase the value of my home? You don't want a renovation that will only prove to be a burden to your property, especially if you're planning to sell it later on. Check this list for projects that can actually increase the value of your home.

6. What interior design style do I like?

There is no right or wrong answer to this question. It depends on personal preferences. One homeowner may lean toward the raw industrial style, while one dreams of a minimalist Zen-like home. Ask yourself which interior style you want for your home so you can plan the look and flow among the rooms accordingly. This will affect your choices of ceiling and flooring materials as well as fixtures and furnishings.

7. Who should I engage for my home renovation?

Torn between hiring an interior designer, contractor, or designand-build firms? After careful research and talking to various interior designers and homeowners, we have uncovered the differences among these three that could help you differentiate and determine what kind of services you should engage and expect. Let this infographic serve as your guide.

Also, find one that is accredited by CaseTrust-RCMA. By choosing CaseTrust-RCMA accredited companies, your money is protected, and your peace of mind guaranteed.

8. Do I need a permit for the renovation works?

It's important to check before you hack, add, or demolish anything in your home. Whether it's a BTO or resale flat, you have to secure prior approval from HDB. A submission of approval is also needed if you plan to build arches and rounded corners, as well as in situations where the door to the bedroom is repositioned.

9. Am I ready for the renovation?

Renovations almost always involve humps and hiccups. "Keep your emotions in check: in particular, learn the meaning of patience. Frustration can build up, often to the point of anger and lawsuits. Being upset is not going to get the job done," advises Resch. Prepare yourself and your home for major renovations, including accommodation arrangements, dealing with delays, and many others.

10. Will I be needing the services of a home inspection company?

You've probably heard of many new homeowners' horror stories on piping defects, flooring problems, and architectural issues. Did you know you have the option of engaging the services of a home inspection company to safeguard your home from future safety and liability issues as the Defects Liability Period (DLP) for new homeowners is only valid for one year?

Original story from Cromly.com



AN Digital Lock knew very well the heightened need to deliver convenience and security in the digital age. Carrying products and brands, such as Samsung Digital Door Lock, Yale Digital Door Lock, Kaba Digital Door Lock and Loghome Digital Lock. AN Digital Lock takes pride as a one-stop shop for security solutions in the market and continues to bring in fresh products in Singapore, maintaining a high level of service, providing a customized service and has its first mega-store in Paya Lebar, displaying and providing demonstrations of their products for customers to get the first-hand experience on how digital locks work and to try other product features.

Be it using passwords, fingerprints, RFID access cards, or your phone to control locks, and even to customize security from locks to doors, AN Digital Lock is your key to a perfect home.

Yale 3115



Samsung P718



Loghome LH300 Metal Gate Lock



Doorbell



BioGuard



Ring Video



2MP HDCVI PTZ Camera







enquiry@andigitallock.com





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10 WAYS TO ADD LIFE TO YOUR LIVING ROOM

SPICE UP THE LOOK OF YOUR LIVING ROOM WITH THESE EXPERT TIPS.

By Samantha Echavez



Have you looked at your living room recently? How does it make you feel? Does it make you feel warm and happy...or does it get you a bit jittery?

"The living room is a major hub in the home. While your entry might be all about first impressions, this room makes a lasting impact. When you entertain, the living room is your showplace. And the last thing you want is a saggy sofa or messy bookshelves ruining the scene," says Jill Vegas, author of Speed Decorating: A Pro Stager's Tips and Trade Secrets for a Fabulous Home in a Week or Less.

arrangement is awkward and heavy, and if there is that nagging feeling that the room is not as comfortable as it should be—maybe because of improper lighting or lack of texture and softness—then it's time to reassess the space and enliven it up. Here are tips that will help you prettify and vivify one of the most important rooms of your home.

- 1. Tidy it up and keep it organised. "The living room is often a catchall for family activities, so it's no wonder that it ends up jumbled and messy. Fortunately, there's an easy solution: Get rid of the stuff! The more stuff you have lying around, the more claustrophobic and less welcoming your space feels. So before you even think of buying anything new, you have to get stripping. You might even find that once the room is clean and clear, you don't need so many new things after all," says Vegas.
- 2. Edit, edit, edit. Adds Vegas: "Remove items that are ugly, stained, or ripped. Sort items into areas or piles: keep it, get rid of it, fix it. If the living room feels chaotic and looks cluttered, if the furniture Remove anything that isn't a 'keep it' item from the room. Clear off table surfaces. Choose a few knickknacks and arrange them so they can be seen, and relocate or get rid of the rest."
 - 3. Spruce up your coffee or center table. According to Vegas, follow these steps: (1) Get a vase and fill it with tulips or peonies; (2) Stack two or three inspiring coffee table books of the same size and colour; and (3) Remove any other clutter.

- **4. Choose table lamps wisely.** "Pick a table lamp only after you've chosen the table where it will sit. It should be a proportionate fit—small-scale table, small lamp; large table, large lamp," say the editors of Real-Life Decorating: Your Look, Your Budget.
- **5. Give your furniture some breathing space.** The biggest and most common mistake that people make in a living room is "pushing everything up against the walls, leaving a 'doughnut' in the middle. Pull the sofa away from the wall to allow it to breathe," says Vegas. Move the sofa six inches from the wall to give it that space.
- 6. Group related furniture pieces together to create distinct spaces for activities like conversation and reading. Position coffee table, end table, and side chair near the sofa for a comfortable conversation area. Or flank another armchair in the living room with a side table and stack of books for a cosy reading nook.
- 7. When getting a rug, choose the right size and place it properly for good proportion. According to the editors of Real-Life Decorating: Your Look, Your Budget: "A good rule of thumb is to purchase a rug that leaves about 8–10 inches of space between the edge of the rug and the walls of your room, or that is large enough to place under at least two legs of each piece of Original story from Cromly.com furniture."

- 8. If your living room is small and cannot accommodate a sofa, go for a transparent table flanked by two poufs, definitely less bulky than sofas and can visually lighten the space. Adds Cristina Paredes, author of Practical Ideas for Small Spaces: "Simple two or three-seat sofas can be complemented with poufs as leg rests, and some even include a footrest operated by a lever. If the area is reserved for the sofa in a corner, there are a number of models that can adapt to this shape."
- 9. Pile on the pillows. The easiest way to brighten your monochromatic sofa? Layer throw pillows on it to add colour. "Velvet pillows, in particular, bring an instant feeling of elegance and comfort," says Vegas.
- 10. Implement flattering and comfortable lighting. No matter how beautifully-styled your living room is, it won't matter if it's not well-lit. "Aside from setting a mood, use light to help define distinct spaces in a room. You need ambient light, which is soft and makes everyone look good. But task lighting-whether for that game of chess or the book of poetry you're reading is important, too," says Vegas. Hang a chandelier for an elegant touch, add a table lamp that casts a pleasant ambient lighting, or use sconces and floor lamps to supplement daylight.





JOIN THE WINDOW SAFETY **BUDDIES TO KEEP OUR COMMUNITY SAFE!**

WHAT?

To encourage homeowners to check their windows at least twice a year, BCA and its supporting partner HDB enhanced their Window Safety Campaign to focus on the common tools that homeowners can use to maintain their windows. Window maintenance is easy – all you need is a mirror to check your windows as well as a brush and lubricating oil to clean the window parts. To install or repair their windows, homeowners are required to engage an approved window contractor.

WHY?

The windows in your home can deteriorate over time due to wear and tear. If not maintained properly, they can fall off posing a serious hazard to persons below such buildings. It is therefore important that windows are checked regularly, and repaired where necessary, to ensure they remain safe and secure.

Homeowners can face a penalty of up to S\$5,000 and/or jail term of up to six months for failing to replace all aluminium rivets in casement windows with stainless steel rivets. In addition, if a window falls due to lack of maintenance, they can face up to a maximum fine of S\$10.000 and/or iail term of up to one year.

HOW?

Do your part by checking your windows regularly. To inspect / retrofit / repair your windows, you are required engage a BCA-approved window contractor.

The list of BCA-approved window contractors and window maintenance tips can be found at:

- https://www.bca.gov.sg/Window_Safety/
- http://www.hdb.gov.sg/window_safety

	мутн	FACT
1	Sliding windows would not fall	Sliding windows can also fall if they are not regularly maintained. Homeowners should check that the safety stoppers and angle strips of sliding windows are in their proper place, clean the windows and ensure that window panels can slide smoothly, and change worn-out safety stoppers and angle strips by engaging an approved window contractor.
2	New windows or windows that are never opened would not fall	All windows are subject to wear and tear, and window parts can become loose or defective over time, causing windows to detach and fall.
3	For casement windows, homeowners only need to check the rivets or screws on the visible part of the window or the pivot points of the window	When maintaining casement windows, homeowners should also use a mirror to check the rivets on the underside and top of the window panel, to ensure they are not corroded or loosened.









engaging an approved window



SLIDING WINDOWS



strips are in their



stoppers and angle strips by engaging an approved window contractor





- 52 Jurong Gateway Road #11-01, Singapore 608550 (Above JEM)
- Contact centre: 1800-3425222 (1800-DIAL BCA) Fax :+65 6334 4287
- Email: bca_enquiry@bca.gov.sg www.bca.gov.sg







With its location at 10 Toh Guan Road, The Furniture Mall offers a wide array of high quality furniture and home ideas, befitting all furnishing needs.

























促进业主与装修商 之间的有效沟通

新加坡的房地产市场,曾分别在1973,1981,1989,1996, 2007及2013年,经历几次景气盛况。 除着经済的发展,人民 生活水平的节节提高,加上外资的涌入,导致房价越来越高. 对一般受薪人士而言,购置房屋大概是他们一生中最昂贵的 资产与投资。一般而言,业主购买新住宅的时候或者房屋居 住一段时期,都会进行装修一番。愉快且满意的装修,是 每个业主所响往的。对装修商而言, 協助业主打造一间舒 适、美观的家居,也是他们专业服务的宗旨。因此促进业主 与装修商之间有効沟通是装修过程中重要的一环。

明确装修的目的

众所周知, 土地是不容易受风吹雨打而破坏, 但是建筑 物却会阥着岁月的流逝而变得陈旧破烂。房屋需要経常维 修,并且每隔几年就要装修一番以保房屋的价值。

人们需要装修房屋,大概有以下几种不同的目的:

- 一. 为了维持房屋的良好情况。
- 二. 为了过新的生活方式的需要。
- 三. 为了提高业主的社会形象。
- 四. 为了适应家庭的新需要。
- 五. 为了提升房屋的价值。

如果装修房屋的目的是为自家住用,就要根据自己目前

以及可预见未来的生活方式,进行详细的规划。因此,屋 主如果能誏装修商了解装修的目的,将有助于为屋主打造 一个合适美丽的家居。

充分了解家人的需要

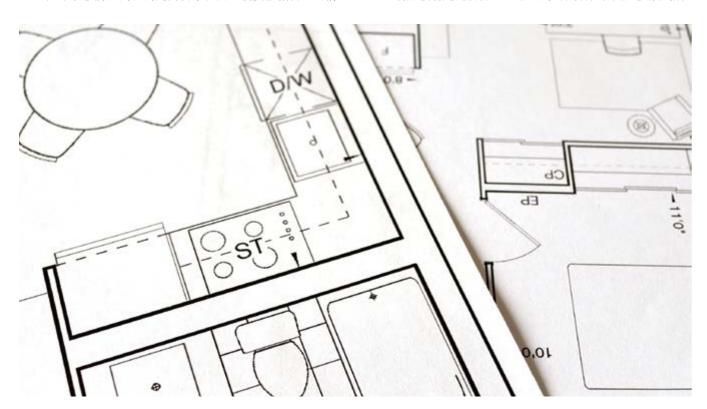
充分了解每个空间的用途,可帮助设计好住屋。设计师 也许可以帮业主一把。不过, 他们不见得能设计出屋主所 需要的空间。这方面,业主要充分了解自己目前的 需要以及他们所要的改变。将自己及家人的需要,经过深 思熟虑後把每个项目都写下来; 然后将装修的项目与装修商讨论。内容可以包括:

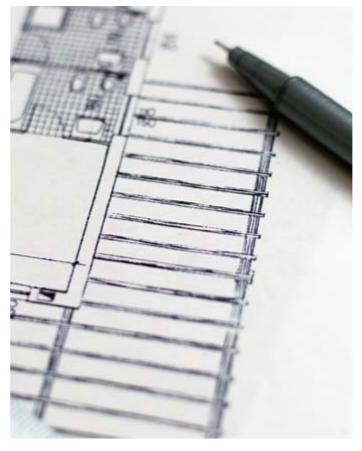
- 一. 增加房间: 比如可能会有增加家庭成员的需要。
- 二. 生活方式的改变, 可能因为要转换工作岗位, 或 自己将退休的需要。
- 三. 提升生活上的需要:增加住房空间,换新的地板、 墙壁、或新冲凉房等。

四. 为了出租或出售: 业主要使自己所拥有的房屋更吸引 租户或出售。一般而言经过装修的房屋都能增加房屋的出 售机会,同时也会使价格比较好。

选择信誉可靠的装修商

新加坡有超过百分之八十三的公民居住在建屋发展局所





兴建的组屋, 其中约有百分之九十五是组屋的拥有者。大部 分业主对他们的家居都很重视,他们会用很长的时间,规 划装修他们的房屋,以期使它成为符合家人生话的舒适家 居。因此,聘用一家信誉可靠的装修商,对于组屋的拥有者 是很重要的。新加坡装修同业高联会 (Singapore Renovation Contractors And Material Suppliers Association, RCMA)及新 加坡的装修与装饰谘詢理事会 (Renovation and Decoration Advisory Centre, RADAC) 在确保装修行业维持高品质的服务 和良好手艺扮演重要的角色。商联会每年都出版装修指南并 附有被该组织认可(accredited)的装修商名单供参考。装修商 可協助业主申请装修准证,建议装修项目,选用建材并计算 出装修费。

这几年随着组屋舆私人住宅的蓬勃发展,装修商如雨后春 荀般纷纷成立。从业者素质参差不斉. 有关装修的投诉案件 也居高不下. 有关装修的投诉案位居全国各行业排行榜上占 第四位,在汽车,电器及电子,美容行业之后. 根据报道今年头七 个月就有800宗装修投诉案,比2015年的1,447宗半数来的略高. 去年最终获得和解的投诉案仅有一半. 原因是装修数额高昂 同时案情复什.

装修项目的预算,需要慎重的考虑各种有关问题。装修时 只选择低成本装修材料,或者不求最好的但求最贵的心态是 某些消费者选材的一大误区。如果只倾向于选择牌子响亮, 广告出现率高的材料, 而不顾及屋主的经济状况和设计风格 是否适合选用这些材料, 那装修的结果可能达不到所要的理 想。明智之举,可以避免浪费,比如可利用绿色家居的建

材以期达到环保与节省开支的目的。选用安全且环保的建材 可减少环境的污染。室内装修应该要把握好所使用材料的安 全。在当今的家居建材中,有些还是十分不环保的,含有对 人体有害的物质, 如果使用在室内装修中, 与人体接触的时 间久了,就可能对人体产生某种伤害。在施工日时要防止装 修造成的污染,装修后要尽量多开窗口通风,保持空气的流 通,以便有效的将有害気体排出屋外,净化环境。

房屋的装修是一件相当花精神的事情,装修商可恊助屋主 在设计前期明确所要修装的项目,确定好装修方案。施工过 程中,难免会遇到一些特殊的施工情况。例如地砖的并花处 理,还有电路及水路的施工,都应在装修前充分考虑并且和 装修商沟通讨论,避免造成不便和纠纷。在装修过程中,屋主 最好能抽空视察装修的情况,一旦发现装修项目与合同不符 时,可以马上通知装修商加以纠正,避免日后发生货不对办

一劳永逸、量力而为

另者,家居装修的项目最好一次性做完。受薪阶层在家居装 修时,居于经济原因,也许可以在装修时选用较为节省能源的 建材,但最好不要把原本需要装修的项目留待日后再做。那 些原本需要装修的项目,如果选择暂时不装修,也会对日后生 活造成不便。况且个别项目不及时做完,过后再装修,由于 项目少,费用很可能比较昂贵。

在现代家庭中,餐厅已成为重要的活动场所。餐厅不仅是 全家共同进餐的地方,而且也是宴请亲明好友、休闲、娱乐 的地方。餐室的装修除了依据一般设计原则, 还要考虑到实 用功能和美化效果。

根据报道,2015年大约有19,306间转组屋成交。 如果以每 个组屋平均装修费用约30,000元估计,那一年的总装修费用可 高达5亿7千多万元之钜. 因此,大部份装修商需要依靠这个市 场的工程。装修费因房屋的大小而有不同。有些富裕的业 主,可能花上更多的巨款在装修房屋上,以达到焕然一新的 效果。不过,比较实际可行的预算,应该是量力而为,根据 自己的经济能力而装修。虽然,银行也可对装修提供贷款, 但是如果开销的数额太大,借贷的款项超过自己的收入,那 就成为日後的负担。房屋的价格可因装璜、楼层高低而有差 别。房屋的售价最终决定于各种因素的影响。比如:房屋所 处的地卓、交通是否方便、附近的设施是否完善、维修情况 好坏、还有装修的实用与美观, 更重要的是房屋出售时的市 况等都是房屋价格高低的决定因素。

总之,业主与装修商之间如果尽力做好沟通,将有助减少 装修投诉问题. 对装修商而言提供优质装修服务不但可提高 商誉,也可令屋主满意,达到良好口碑的宣传効果.有了良 好的商誉,生意也将接着而来。 屋主在进行装修过程中圆满愉 快,最终装修好的家居合适,美观。 对于业主与装修商都有利 的有效沟通,应该鼓励和提倡.

新加坡装修同业商联会, 会务顾问

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4 KITCHEN RENOVATION TIPS TO REMEMBER

SOME POINTERS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOU UPDATE YOUR KITCHEN

By Samantha Echavez



Ah, to fantasise about our dream kitchen. "This is the room that is easy to blow the biggest bucks on. Designer stainless steel appliances? Sure. Granite benchtops? Bring 'em on. But when the bill arrives, many a renovator can regret their choices," says Alex May, author of Planning Your Perfect Home Renovation.

"Spend the money that you believe is appropriate for your lifestyle choice," adds May. So before you do get carried away overhauling your kitchen, check these kitchen reno tips first:

1. Decide what type of kitchen you want so you know where to invest your money on.

The glamour kitchen. "Many renovators simply want their kitchen to look more modern and to become a design feature of the home. They will spend money on high-quality finishes like cupboard doors, backsplashes, and appliances," says May.

The chef's kitchen. If you care more about having the right equipment and configuration to whip up delicious meals, then spending money on appropriate appliances and cooking services should be your priority.

The functional kitchen. "Some people go batty trying to cook every day in a kitchen that has no bench space or can't accommodate two people. This renovator just wants to change the configuration. This could be achieved with some ingenuity and a [small] budget," says May.

The budget kitchen. "Other renovators don't care much about the function of the kitchen, but need it to look presentable for resale. For this renovator, cost is the most important consideration. If the current fittings and fixtures are serviceable and all that is necessary is some maintenance, paint and the replacing of door handles and splashbacks, a [small] budget may be adequate," explains May.



2. Good kitchen design lies in the configuration of the cabinets, cooking area, and sink. Work the kitchen work triangle within your kitchen layout, be it a galley kitchen, G-shaped kitchen, kitchen with a centre island, L-shaped kitchen, or a U-shaped kitchen.

3. Note the components that make up your kitchen:

- Cabinets. You can have them made by a carpenter, but it's cheaper to use a modular kitchen. Also, the biggest expenditure in most kitchens is cabinetry—about 45 percent of the total cost. Check out different cabinet styles here.
- **Countertops.** Laminate countertop is the cheapest while granite and stone are more expensive options.
- Door handles and hardware. "If you're refurbishing or just maintaining and repairing, remember that shiny new door handles will revive a tired old kitchen," says May.
- Refrigerators. When planning your kitchen, leave a space for your fridge as refrigerators vary widely in size.
- Stoves and ovens. "These days, most ovens are electric and are often permanently wired on their own circuit.

 Gas stovetops are popular, but require good rangehoods to cope with the heat and steam output. There is a new generation of steam and convection cookers that use low energy but offer good-quality cooking results," says May.
- Exhaust systems. According to May, the more you spend on powerful cooking equipment, the more you will need to spend on ducting the cooking fumes out of your kitchen.



- **Backsplashes.** These protect your wall from splashes of food and fat. Look for backsplash designs here.
- **Kickboards.** "These are attached between the floor and the bottom of the cabinet carcasses and stop dirt from getting underneath your kitchen cabinets," explains May.
- Floors. It will easily be the dirtiest floor in the house, so go for a good quality, non-slip, and easily washable floor surface.
- Lighting. You need good task lighting over the sink, the stovetop, and preparation areas. Know more about properly lighting your kitchen here.
- **Taps.** May recommends getting a good-quality kitchen tap—usually a mixer.
- Electrics. Says May, "If you change the configuration
 of a kitchen, the power points to run the dishwasher,
 rangehood, fridge and stove may need to be moved. It
 is also wise to plan where you need benchtop power
 points and install 'quad' points rather than 'doubles'."
- Plumbing. The kitchen sink and dishwasher are the only features in the kitchen that require plumbing.

4. It helps to use a kitchen planning template. "Using templates on grid paper can help you plan the fine details of your kitchen layout. All you have to do is measure your rooms and note the positions of doors, windows, power points, and plumbing on your grid. Then cut out your templates and arrange them on the plan to try different kitchen layouts," says May.

Original story from Cromly.com

GETTING A WATER HEATER? GO FOR GAS!





With many water heater types and brands available in the market, choosing the right water heater for your home may seem like a daunting task. However, once you understand the differences, the preferred choice will be clear! A gas water heater allows you to enjoy the benefits of an instantaneous water heater and rain shower capabilities while you save more on water heating utilities.

There are some key factors to consider when purchasing a water heater and these include convenience, running cost, affordability, reliability and safety. Here's a checklist of what you should consider.



1▼ Instantaneous vs Pre-heated **Water Heaters**

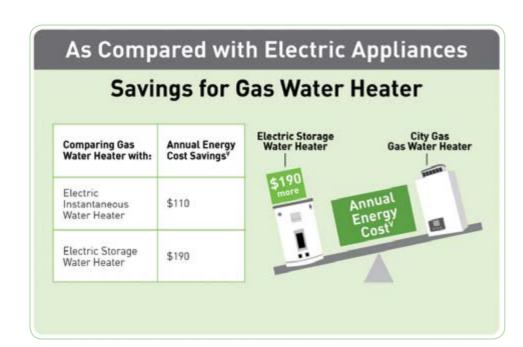
Both gas water heaters and electric storage water heaters serve as a central heater; so all you need is one water heater to serve multiple points. Unlike storage water heaters which require pre-heating, gas water heaters are instantaneous water heaters.

Tip: Storage water heaters need to be switched off after use to avoid any energy wastage when you are not showering. With a gas water heater, you need not worry about this as it operates on-demand.

2▼ Running Cost

With free gas pipe installation of up to \$90 for HDB homes, you can find affordable gas water heaters at City Gas Gallery. There may be additional water piping cost. However, you can recover the cost in about 2 years, based on a study which shows that a family can save about \$190/year^v as compared to using electric storage water heaters.

^VBased on a 2014 study by ZEB-Technology Pte Ltd for public agencies in Singapore.



3▼ Water Pressure and Rain Shower Suitability

Instantaneous water heaters typically experience water pressure loss. However, for gas water heaters, the water pressure loss is very low and they are capable of supporting almost all rain showers designed for HDB use.

> **Tip:** Check out bit.ly/CGrainshower to view a live demo of a rain shower connected to a gas water heater in a HDB home!



Gas water heaters are designed with built-in safety features like flame failure device and are tested to EN26 standard by TÜV SÜD PSB Singapore.

5▼ Clean Energy

City Gas gas water heaters emit 63%^ less carbon emissions and are more environmentally friendly for your

> ^Energy study conducted by Dr Lee Siew Eang, NUS.







Gas Gallery located at 8 Cross Street, the only place in Singapore that offers live gas product demonstrations. Visit today for friendly customer service and the best advice on safe and reliable gas water heaters!

Tip: Check out City Gas Facebook page at www.facebook.com/sgcitygas for upcoming promotions!

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Benefits of Gas Water Heater



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Greater Savings

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Safe & Reliable

Gas Water Heaters are designed with built-in safety features and tested to EN26 standard by TÜV SÜD PSB Singapore.







Benefits of Gas Clothes Dryer



Greater Savings Gas Clothes Dryers incur lower

running costs.



Shorter Drying Time Use half the drying time when you use a Gas Clothes Dryer.





As Compared with Electric Appliances-

Savings for Gas Water Heater

Comparing Gas Water Heater with:	Annual Energy Cost Savings ^v
Electric Instantaneous Water Heater	\$110
Electric Storage Water Heater	\$190



^vBased on a 2014 study by ZEB-Technology Pte Ltd for public agencies in Singapore.

Savings for Gas Clothes Dryer

Item	City Gas Gas Clothes Dryer (RD-600CG)	Typical Electric Dryer
Heat Input	4.65kWh	3.6kWh
Drying Capacity	6kg	6kg
Drying Time	60 minutes	120 minutes
Running Cost (per year)^	\$84.04	\$139.62
Savings [^]	40%^	

^Calculations are based on twice-weekly usage, and gas and electricity tariffs as of 1 February 2017 and 1 January 2017 respectively.

Timer Control



Flame Failure Device

Safety comes first: Gas supply is cut off if the flame goes out.



Timer Alert Function

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Website: www.citygas.com.sq Email: gallery@citygas.com.sg



^{*} Energy study conducted by Dr Lee Siew Eang, NUS. # Tested by Tokyo Food Sanitation Association, Food Research Laboratory.

urban chic character





TYPE OF PROPERTY BTO 5 Room TOTAL SPACE 1205 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 2 weeks

STYLE Urban Chic with a Twist **OWNER** Family of 2 + 1 Baby

Urban chic best describes this renovation with its blend of rustic and modern. The details of each room are accentuated by up-lighting that highlights their varied colours and textures.

The contemporary furnishings consist of polished wood with neutral shades of brown, black, and white. The walls are all painted in the same colour family as the furniture; white complimenting the light browns and adding light and airiness to the entire space.

In the living room, dark tiling on the floor sets off the decor and helps the wood-laminated feature wall to stand out. Spaciousness is achieved with built-in storage space, and decor is uncluttered allowing maximum light to enter the room.





Likewise in the master bedroom, storage is discreetly hidden - and mirrored surfaces, together with an earthy colour palette, makes the room feel open and bright.

In the kitchen, the idea of urban chic comes into its own with a lively mix of surfaces and textures. Black interplays with chrome and wood, and brickwork interacts with mosaic tiles – to create a busy but stylish backdrop.

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natural comfort zone





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY BTO 5 Room flat, Upper Serangoon Crescent

TOTAL SPACE 1500 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 weeks

> STYLE Scandinavian Chic **OWNER** Young Couple, Family of 2

This home was inspired by the classic design of Scandinavian homes, and it shows how a living space can be integrate with the outdoors – incorporating nature into its decor, in a simple and minimalistic way.

Large windows capture maximum daylight, which is further amplified by the all-white colour scheme of the home. The choice of white paints and fabrics has completely transformed wha was formerly a much darker, contemporary interior. The change in colour has created a sense of spaciousness, and really opened up the various living spaces.

As in keeping with classic Scandinavian style, the interiors are geometric and minimalist in style and scale, and characteristically natural elements of wood and stone are used liberally in fixtures and focal points.





There is a definite sense of comfort and relaxation throughout – and one can easily imagine the entire family unwinding in this earthy oasis after a hard day in the urban jungle!

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modern victorian





042

TYPE OF PROPERTY 5 Room BTO Flat at Yishun

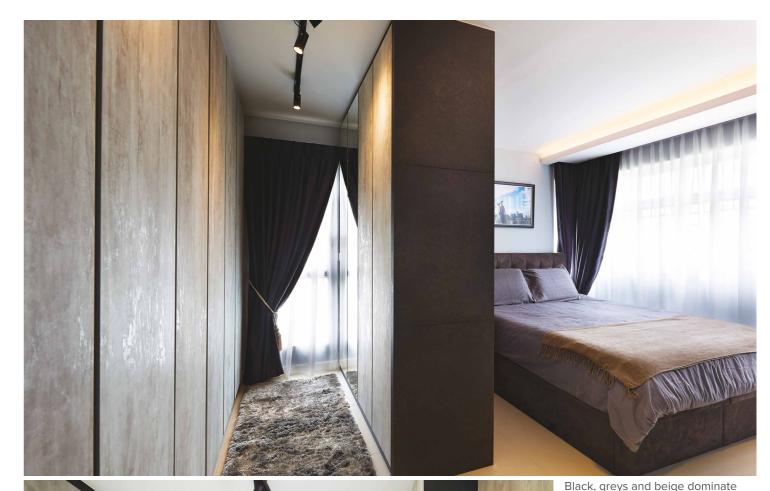
TOTAL SPACE 1200 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 6 weeks

STYLE Morden Victorian

OWNER Young Couple, Family of 3

The classical Victorian look is exemplified by warm and rich colours, large opulent furnishings and the use of heavy fabrics and draperies. In this renovation the style has been brought up to date with all the modern trimmings – from modern light fittings to minimally designed storage units that create space while still maintaining the grandiose look that befits the style.

The definite focal point in this home is the carefully selected furniture, from plush over-stuffed chairs to a massive, opulent leather sofa that takes centre-stage in the living room. Balancing these very classical pieces with a more modern design, we find a very contemporary arrangement in the kitchen – and it is the strong colour palette throughout, that brings the entire look together.





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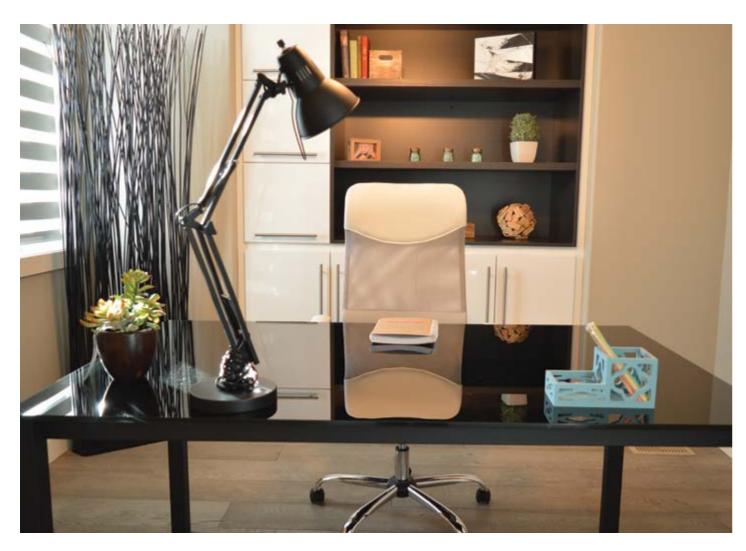
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8 DECLUTTERING TIPS THAT WILL ONLY TAKE 5 MINUTES OF YOUR TIME

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HOME MORE ORGANISED WITH MINIMAL EFFORT AND LESS TIME

by Samantha Echavez



Decluttering doesn't have to be a back-breaking chore that saps so much energy out of us. It doesn't have to take hours—according to Donna Smallin, author of Clear the Clutter, Find the Happiness, "many decluttering tips can be implemented in as little as one minute. Many of these tips focus on ways to save time, reduce those piles of clutter, and help you keep your home more organized with less effort. After all, there's more to life than good housekeeping and the quicker you get your chores done, the quicker you can have **2. Tackle what's visible.** No time to do a thorough kitchen cleanup? fun doing whatever you love doing."

minutes or less!) decluttering spree:

- 1. Use the time you spend waiting to do one quick chore. Quickly wipe the sink and faucet while the shower heats up (one minute), sweep the floor or remove old leftovers from the refrigerator while the popcorn pops (three minutes), clean the toilet while the bathtub fills up (five minutes).
- Settle for the countertop first. When decluttering your home office, start with your desk. "If you work at home, think of how much more Here are some tips that will motivate you to go on a quick (five efficient you will be when you have a clean space to work. Leave the







file drawers for last. Forget beginning with a drawer. It is hidden and you will not be able to look back on it with pride," says Mike Nelson, author of Stop Clutter From Stealing Your Life.

- 3. "Build up momentum by starting with a small project," says Diyana Nicole, author of Home Sanctuary: Declutter, Simplify, and Relax the Natural Way. For example, buy a decorative bowl and place it on a side table. Use it as a catch-all for small things like keys, coins, and other accessories.
- 4. Establish a filing system for mail, so they don't take over your kitchen countertop or dining table. It doesn't have to be complicated; just buy a tray to hold them all. Toss junk mail regularly.
- 5. Move clutter out of sight then toss/keep them away later when you're free. Go to a room and give yourself five minutes to gather all the clutter from tabletops, inside the cabinets, on shelves, and on the floor. Place them in a plastic bag, and sort them later into four categories: keep, toss, relocate, or sell/donate.

Take this "Keep or Toss" Quiz:

Have I used this item in the past year? Will I need it on a definite date in the future? Do I need to keep it for legal or tax purpose? Would it be difficult to get another if I needed it again someday?

If all your answers are no, toss it.

- 6. Don't turn the coffee table into your filing area. Remove books, documents, or newspapers, and place them where they
- 7. Set a timer for two minutes...then remove five items from your wardrobe. You can either donate or sell them. Don't feel bad about it, because according to Smallin, "most people wear 20 percent of their clothes 80 percent of the time."
- 8. Make it a habit performing these five-minute tasks every day: making the bed, wiping the bathroom countertop, or clearing the floor.

The key here, according to the experts, is not to overwhelm yourself. "Don't try to take care of your whole house at once. Declutter each room one at a time, regularly setting aside some time to clean up. Start by taking a few minutes of your schedule each day to organise your home. Setting increments will make the task less daunting," says Nicole.

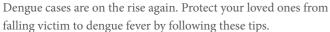
Original story from Cromly.com

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HOME DENGUE-FREE

KEEP YOUR HOME MOSQUITO-FREE AND YOUR FAMILY SAFE FROM THIS DREADED DISEASE.

By Jerni Camposano





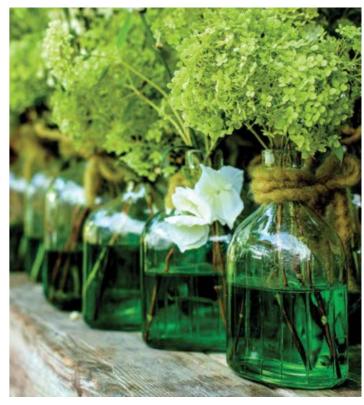
- 1. Get rid of all sources of stagnant water. To ensure that you don't live with mosquitoes, you have to eradicate their breeding habitat. And their fave place? Stagnant water, which is their top breeding spot.
- Keep kitchen and bathroom dry. These are the usually damp areas of the house. Inspect the bottom of your refrigerator, empty out the cooler if you're using one, clean out dish rack tray, mop the floor, cover toilet bowls and trash bins, throw away wet kitchen waste.
- Turn containers over or cover them. Do not let empty pails,



buckets, basins, and watering cans collect water so it's best to turn them over when not in use or completely cover them.

- Do not overwater plants and drain the water in flower pots. If possible, avoid using plant pots. Also, scrub them thoroughly to remove mosquito eggs.
- Clean out vases that have flowers or plants. Mozzies will have a grand time breeding in there. Change water every other day and wash the roots of the flower or plant to get rid of mosquito eggs. Cover bamboo poles when not in use. Those HDB pole holders are also possible breeding ground for these dengue-carrying insects. Empty bottles that collect rainwater should go to the trash. Again, potential happy place for mosquitoes.

- **2.** Ensure your window and door screens do not have holes. Cool breeze is most welcome in your home, but not mosquitoes. Repair broken screens and keep doors closed to prevent their entry.
- **3. Apply mosquito repellant**. Repellants offer added protection by reducing your chances of getting bitten by a mosquito. Check here for guidelines and safety precautions.
- **4.** Apply household pesticide to dark corners of the house that are potential resting ground for mosquitoes. Use household pesticide when your neighbourhood has been declared a dengue cluster. Read here for more information on applying household pesticide.
- **5. Consider sleeping under a bed net.** Ensure you are safe from mosquito bites even when you hit the sack.
- **6.** Involve the whole family in the fight against dengue fever. It's better if they are also armed with knowledge on how to prevent this dreaded disease from getting into your home. Here's a checklist from NEA for a mozzie-free home that you can print for them:



AT ALL TIMES

- Turn pails and watering cans over and store them under shelter.
- Loosen soil from potted plants to prevent the accumulation of stagnant water on the surface of the hardened soil.
- Do not block the flow of water in scupper drains along common corridors in HDB estates. Avoid placing potted plants and other paraphernalia over the scupper drains.
- Cover rarely used gully traps. Replace the gully trap with non-perforated ones and install anti-mosquito valves.
- Cover bamboo pole holders after use. Rainwater can potentially accumulate in these bamboo pole holders if they are uncovered and create a habitat.
- No tray or receptacles should be placed beneath and/or on top of any air-conditioning unit so as not to create a condition favourable for mosquito breeding.

EVERY OTHER DAY

- Remove water in plant pot plates. Clean and scrub the plate thoroughly to remove mosquito eggs. Avoid the use of plant pot plates, if possible.
- Change water in flower vases. Clean and scrub the inner sides of vases. Wash roots of flowers and plants thoroughly as mosquito eggs can stick to them easily.

ONCE A WEEK

- Clear fallen leaves and stagnant water in your scupper drains and garden. These leaves could collect water or cause blockages to the drains, thus resulting in the buildup of stagnant water.
- Clear any stagnant water in your air cooler unit.

ONCE A MONTH

- Add prescribed amounts of sand granular insecticide into vases, gully traps and roof gutters, even if they are dry.
- Clear away fallen leaves in roof gutters and apron drains. If structurally feasible, remove the roof gutters.

Original story from Cromly.com

scandinavian subtlety





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY HDB BTO 4 Room TOTAL SPACE 915 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 6 weeks

> STYLE Scandinavian **OWNER** Young Family

The warm and natural tones of Scandinavian design can be seen throughout this renovation. This four-room flat has been transformed into an earthy retreat from the city; almost rustic

Classical use of light wood furnishings and veneers, matched with wooden flooring and brickwork for the feature walls, opens up the space and creates an illusion of openness. Pendant lamps and generously distributed ceiling spotlights also add further illumination to the apartment, maximising the amount of light throughout.





A neutral palette too is typical of Scandinavian style, from whites through to creams, beige and light browns. From decor to fabrics and furnishings, these colours blend harmoniously and give the design a real sense of uniformity.

The decor and furnishings are minimalist but smart and functional - complimenting the entire layout

- characteristically uncluttered with clean lines throughout.

Flush-fitting cupboards and cleverly incorporated storage units also maximum the space available in this HDB apartment.













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wood work magic





CASE FILE ___

TYPE OF PROPERTY 3 Bedroom Condominium

TOTAL SPACE 1163 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 4 weeks

> STYLE Modern Contemporary **OWNER** Young Couple with 3 Kids

A palette of wood – from furniture, to wallpapering and even ceiling fans - is used extensively throughout this modern contemporary interior design; creating a warm and welcoming feel throughout the apartment. The owners are a young couple with three children, and the 'homey' atmosphere provides a perfect backdrop for time spent together as a family.

Indirect lighting and light troughs help to further emphasise the warmth of the home, and also creates an illusionary effect of spaciousness.

The contemporary period is exemplified by the use of organic materials such as wood, rock, slate, cotton, wool, and other gorgeous textiles – and this can be seen throughout the entire renovation.





Whites and browns evoke a sense of modernity and warmth throughout. The colours blend together to achieve an overall harmonious look. The classic white walls create a minimalistic backdrop for the textured wallpaper, brown leather furniture and cool white stone flooring.

This contemporary home has even made use of natural and organic materials in the decking outside, and simple decorative elements displayed throughout the living area are used to add character to the overall look.

















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COOKING UP A STORM: THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO YOUR KITCHEN RENOVATION

UNDERTAKING A KITCHEN REDO BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START? READ ON AS WE TAKE YOU THROUGH EACH STEP OF THIS SEEMINGLY CHALLENGING HOME PROJECT.

by Camille Besinga





Planning a kitchen renovation (or any reno project for that matter) can be pretty overwhelming—there's so much to do, so much to consider, where oh where does one start?

Clare Steel, author of the book Step-by-Step Home Design & Decorating, says "The sheer number of components involved in redesigning a kitchen means that it requires particularly careful scheduling. The majority of your time will probably be spent preparing for the kitchen to be fitted, but if you do this job properly, the rest of the refit should run smoothly." Use our notes below as your guide to get you started.

1. Work on your dream kitchen layout.

When fixing your kitchen, remember that it's not just about placing your appliances and furniture where you wish. You have to consider following a proper work triangle so as not to make working, cooking, or populating the kitchen so difficult. Take note as well what budget you're willing to work with; it's better to determine this as early as now, so that you'll have a guide on how much to spend and what specific elements you'll need to purchase.

2. Think of how to light your kitchen.

Lighting is crucial in the kitchen, as it is a room that requires you to clearly see what you're doing—especially when you're slicing those vegetables.

3. Consult a kitchen designer or contractor.

Once you've determined the above, you have a choice on whether to work directly with a contractor, or have a kitchen designer work with you. Going with the latter may be a pricier option, but well worth the investment as he or she will be able to advise you on what would work with your preferences. When hiring a contractor, you should also check that your choice contractor is a registered renovation contractor.

It's also important to note that at this point, you should already have an idea on what appliances will go into your kitchen, in case you plan on replacing your old ones. This will help the kitchen designer determine the size of cabinet units to place in the room.

If you choose to go with the reno on your own, be prepared to do most of the legwork. It may be more difficult, but still definitely fulfilling once you've seen the end result.

4. Order your cabinet units.

When you've finalised the plans for your kitchen, have the cabinets manufactured either by your own fitter, or by the kitchen company's fitter. The latter, again, can be costlier, but also does away with the hassle of figuring out how to install certain units. Note that manufacturing may take a few weeks (to as much as a few months!), so consider this when planning your timeline.

5. Start demolishing old cabinetry.

While your cabinet units are being made, take the time to start demolishing old cabinetry in your existing space. Before you start, however, make sure that you already have the proper demolishing and building permits you'll need to take on the reno project. You'll also need to follow specific safety guidelines and measures when tearing down built-in furniture or walls.

6. Install electric cables and pipes.

Once your kitchen is bare, have a specialist begin on electrical wiring works and plumbing. Check if you've got enough electrical sockets (for kitchens, it's recommended to have sockets behind appliances and on worktop level).

7. Lay the kitchen floor.

Now's the time to have your supplier or contractor lay the flooring material. Ceramic tiles are one of the most popular materials for kitchens, but you can also use natural stone, treated or engineered wood, marble, or moisture-resistant laminate, vinyl, or linoleum. If your floor is not level, it has to be levelled properly by an expert. Discuss your options with the supplier you're hiring for this specific job.

8. Prep the walls.

Once the wiring and plumbing are done, cover up walls with plaster, and your preferred wall covering. A few coats of paint are recommended, or you can also choose to cover up with tile. Consider also your ceiling and other woodwork in the kitchen, such as window trim or moulding.

9. Expect delivery of kitchen.

Around this time, check your schedule for when cabinet units will be delivered and installed. Follow up with your fitter on the delivery date, and when your kitchen arrives, free your schedule up to check if all units have indeed been manufactured to your specifications. If some parts have been damaged, ask your fitter to replace them immediately.

10. Install cabinet units and countertop.

When you're sure that all the cabinetry and appliances have been delivered, have the fitter install the units and worktop first. This may take a few days to over a week.

11. Fit the sink, faucet, and appliances.

After installing the cabinet units, you may have the fitter or contractor install the kitchen sink/s and taps. While appliances normally can be installed by homeowners, it is best to have a professional connect and check all appliances. Again, make sure that you are following safety guidelines and measures provided for by the government.

12. Install the backsplash, if using.

Your kitchen is now looking almost done. If you plan on using backsplash for the wall behind your cooking hob or the sink,

install it now. Measure them before fixing in place so that you can account for spaces like electrical sockets.

13. Finish wiring, plumbing works, and install light fixtures.

If you haven't installed light fixtures yet, do so now. Your ceiling may need touch ups after this task, but it's nothing that a little paint won't solve.

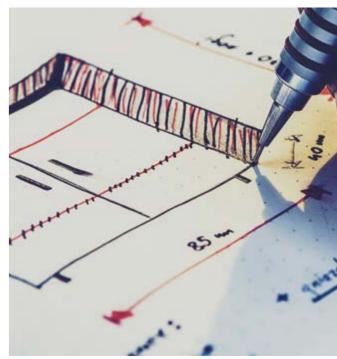
14. Take care of final details, like cabinet hardware and other decorative elements.

You can finally take care of the finishing touches at this point: cornices, moulding, knobs, handles, hinges, etc. Once those are done, you can also begin decorating your kitchen, and placing your pots, pans, utensils, plateware, glassware, and other tools inside the drawers and cabinets.

Welcome to your new kitchen!

Original story from Cromly.com





scandinavian chic space





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY 4 Room HDB BTO, Dawson Road

TOTAL SPACE 860 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 weeks

STYLE Scandinavian White Minimalist

OWNER Young Couple

Openness and space are the keys to this very modern renovation. Using the clean and minimalist lines of Scandinavian design, the owners have opted for that classic yet timeless combination of white and black to colour the entire home, and lend a sense of cohesiveness throughout every room and living space.

From the kitchen to the bedroom and on to the living room – white dominates. Walls, furnishings and work surfaces are all in white, creating a sense of spaciousness that fools the eye into thinking this apartment is much bigger than it actually is.





Black is cleverly used in the door and window frames, and even the ceiling fan and exposed trims are colour co-ordinated, adding a stylish accent that continues the minimalist theme throughout the

Wood accents play a huge role in Nordic style, and the unfinished wood pieces placed in the various rooms help create a sense of connection to nature and the outdoors. But again, everything has its own space and nothing is cluttered in this oasis of brightness and light.









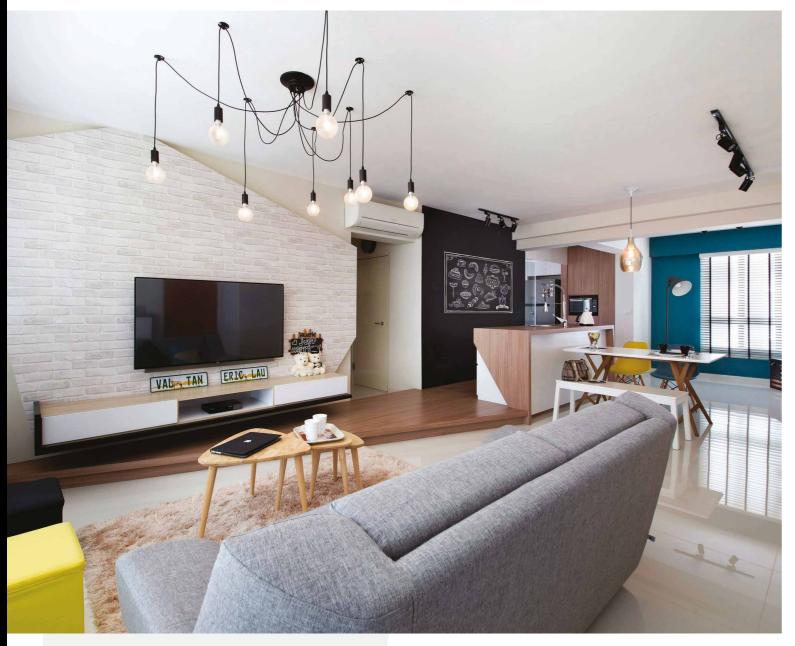


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scandinavian colour twist





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY BTO 5 room TOTAL SPACE 1506 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 12 Weeks

STYLE Modern Scandinavian **OWNER** Young Couple, Family of 2 Using the Scandinavian theme as a template, this interior design sought to achieve the perfect balance between modern, clean lines and chic style.

However, with the growing popularity of Nordic interior style throughout Singapore, the designers wanted to infuse some individual character and uniqueness into the classically minimalist and neutral theme.





To keep it really light-hearted, clean lines and quirky shapes were introduced into the design. And while the foundation colours of white, greys and light wood grains were retained, splashes of yellow and green were incorporated to create lively accents.

Soft furnishings like the couch and the clean lines of the dining table were used to further emphasise the theme of simple yet stylish.

The design calls on a palette of just three major colour groups to create a sense of uniformity and cohesiveness throughout the entire renovation.









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waterside resort





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY 4 bedroom Condominium at Hedges Park

TOTAL SPACE 1345 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 6 weeks STYLE Modern Resort **OWNER** Young Family of Four Water is not only the inspiration behind the design of this family home, it is also the driving force behind the owner's business.

And in recognition of that fact, this very modern renovation injects subtle splashes of blue and turquoise throughout the living area – both mirroring and complimenting the view of the swimming pool

In keeping with the modern resort theme, the decor includes sleek, streamlined modern furnishings and a matching vibrant colour scheme work that reflects the colours of nature – browns, greys and whites.

Materials such as wood and stone can withstand heat and humidity - that's why they are the preferred materials in actual holiday resorts.





And in this home, that resort feel is recreated in the custom-built shelving in the living room, which extends into the decked patio area.

And just like a neatly compartmentalised hotel room, all storage space and shelving in this home is cleverly concealed, yet designed for easy, unobtrusive access.

All-in-all, this is a tropical escape from the city; a bright and colourful sanctuary for this young family.



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HAVE A SPLASHING GOOD TIME: BUDGET-FRIENDLY WAYS TO PRETTIFY YOUR BATHROOM

TRANSFORM YOUR BATHROOM WITHOUT SPENDING MUCH

By Jerni Camposano



Although this small space in your home is one of the least expensive to decorate, it is often neglected. You can definitely do more than installing a new shower curtain—there are more fun ways to give your bathroom a facelift. The best part: the budget-friendly options!

1. Liven up a clinical bathroom with colours. What better way to brighten up your space than introducing fun hues? "In a bathroom where plumbing fixtures, tiles, and other features are on the bland side, a wall or two of vivid color can make the room a lot more

interesting," says Scott Gibson in New Bathroom Ideas That Work. "Color can play a role in mood; some are calming, others are stimulating."

If painting one wall is a tad bit overwhelming, you can still create a happier bath space by choosing colourful accessories—glass dishes, liquid dispensers, tissue holder, among others—that can be periodically changed for a fresh look every time.

2. Get the right mirror. Introduce more light and drama to your

bathroom by installing a mirror. It doesn't cost a lot, but produces an eye-catching effect.

"What is wonderful about a mirror is the way it opens up a room, making it feel bigger, Whatever the amount of light in your bathroom, the mirror will catch it and reflect it back. If you can position a mirror near a window overlooking a garden or water, you'll gain an even more dramatic look for your bath," suggest Coral Nafie and Barbara Cameron in Guide to Home Decorating: A Room-by-Room Guide to Creating the House of Your Dreams.

- 3. Personalise, personalise, personalise. "As with any room in the house, add personal details to your bathroom to help make it feel special, create a theme, or unify a color scheme," says Gibson. Simple decorative items such as wall art, monogrammed towels, bathroom mats, and shower curtains can put your personal stamp on this space.
- **4.** Organise your bathroom with budget-friendly storage ideas. The bathroom is where you'll find all sorts of small items—it's important to clear the clutter so you can make the most out of the area. You can use a stepping stool to keep your towels and display

knickknacks, opt for a hanging towel rack, or park your toiletries on an ornamental stool in the shower area.

5. Bring in a touch of green. Ever heard of the "bathyard" trend? Plants make for an affordable upgrade to your bathroom and look great in there, too.

According to Cy DeCosse Incorporated's Decorating the Bathroom: 103 Projects & Ideas, "Live plants add softness to a predominantly hard-surfaced bathroom. For an ever-changing room accent, they can be grown in a container garden or terrarium. Plants can thrive in the bathroom, provided the plant varieties are carefully selected according to the bathroom's environment."

6. Display candles. Not only do candles look and smell good in your bathroom, they also instantly add warmth to the space. "There is so much variety of colors, shapes and sizes of candles available. But it is best if you buy ones which will coordinate with the decor of your bathroom," advise the editors of Better Homes and Gardens in Do It Yourself: DIY Ideas.

Original story from Cromly.com



HOME OF THE FUTURE

DISCOVER THE BENEFITS OF HAVING A SMART HOME

By Samantha Ecahvez



"It's expensive!"

"It's something in the future."

"I don't know."

These are the usual responses when people are asked about home control or home automation, according to Nicholas Kemp, author of Home Automation Application Guide. However, it's high time to dispel these notions and approach home automation in a new way. Think of home automation as a tool that will serve your family and give you convenience, security, and peace of mind.

"The primary drivers of home automation are convenience, comfort, and peace of mind," reiterates Kemp. "For the most part, people want help in their day-to-day activities. Homeowners are looking for a little more time in their day to do what they want: improved comfort, peace of mind that the costs are being managed, that their family is secure, that equipment is operating appropriately and doesn't need their constant attention."

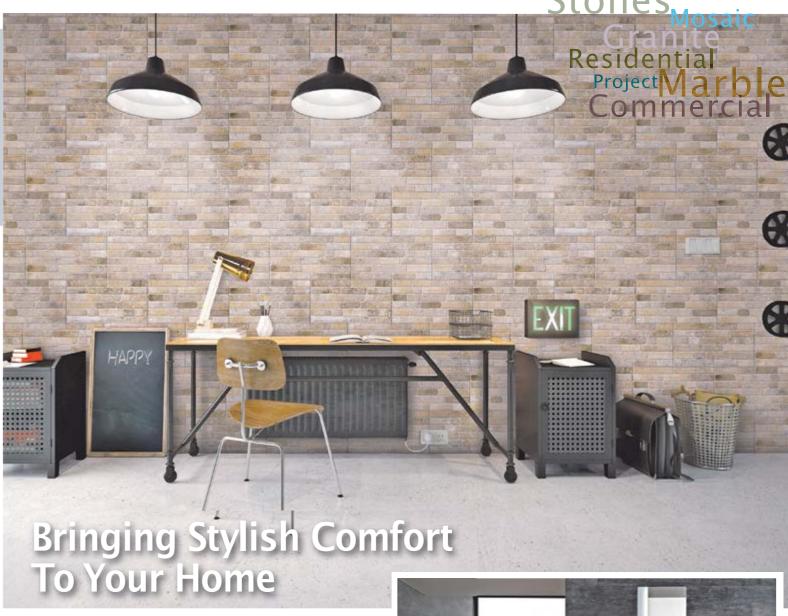
And home automation technologies are no longer reserved for the wealthy—with a few thousands of dollars and your computer or your mobile device, you can already enjoy the benefits of a smart, technology-driven home.

1. It solves time and place problems. "It is difficult with ordinary

controls to overcome the problem of being away from home. But automation allows you to manage many aspects of your home environment from any location in the world," says Dennis Brewer, author of Home Automation Made Easy.

- **2.** It maximises convenience. Save time and experience a different kind of convenience when you can control nearly every electrical appliance, security systems, and entertainment systems in your home.
- **3.** It neutralises physical challenges. For an elderly or a physically challenged person who has to spend a significant amount of energy just to perform a simple task such as turning on the light, home automation features sound like a dream come true.
- **4. It's energy-efficient.** "Within the automated home, energy costs can be minimised by leveraging all the home automation features that directly or indirectly impact energy use. These features are used to ensure that the energy used in the household does not go unnecessarily wasted," says Brewer.
- **5. It's built with your safety and security in mind.** "Smart phones and the Internet can now be tied into the home automation communications loop to allow for system control from anywhere in the world for nearly instantaneous feedback when something goes awry," adds Brewer.

Original story from Cromly.com







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TYPE OF PROPERTY Condominium, The Minton

TOTAL SPACE 1500 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 12 weeks

STYLE Contemporary **OWNER** Chinese Family This very contemporary renovation is a true celebration of Wood! Custom-made laminated wood panelling seamlessly blends the walls with flush-fitting storage units and cupboards and drawers in each room – creating an illusion of a continuous wall surface, uninterrupted throughout the entire apartment.

The ultra-modern and minimalist kitchen features another custommade dining and workspace, including European-style dry cabinets and a durable L-shaped solid surface worktop. The breakfast bar is framed with another imposing wood panel and ceiling feature, illuminated by stylish and contemporary pendant lamps.





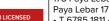
Different grains and textures of wood are used to demarcate different areas of the home, and a neutral palette of whites, beiges and greys in the furnishings and decor being the entire look together.

An diverse array of decorative lighting fixtures and flushed ceiling spotlights add brightness to the entire home, while further illuminating and accentuating details in the various wood grains and surfaces of the walls.









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resort-style hideaway

Darwin Interior Creating Dream Homes



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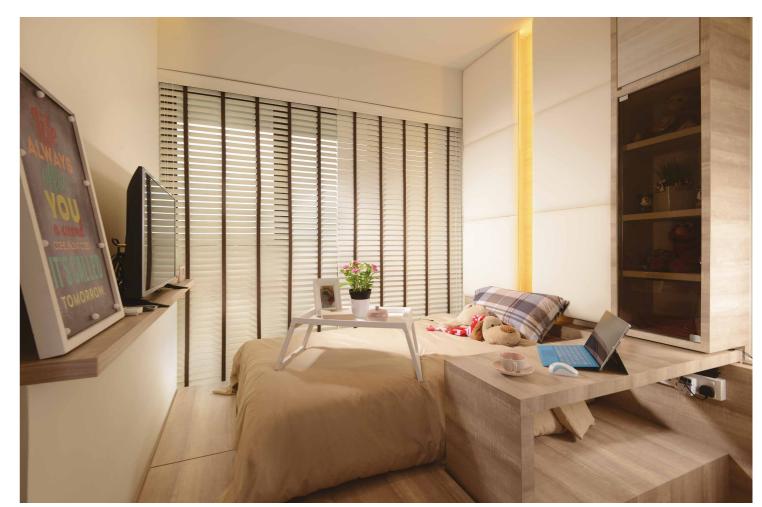
TYPE OF PROPERTY 2 + 1 Condominium

TOTAL SPACE 818 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 weeks

STYLE Modern Resort Concept **OWNER** Single Professional

The fast-paced life of the city can often become overwhelming, so what better way to escape from the rat race than to your own, personal oasis – which is just what the owners of this home have decided to do.

With a design focussed around a modern resort theme, the renovation recreates a hotel suite layout throughout the living and dining spaces. A warm colour scheme, solid wooden furnishings and natural light pouring in from the balcony, all come together to create a comfortable yet chic environment.





Instead of sticking to a single type of wood, the designers use different wood laminates to add texture to the space. There are lighter tones in the bedroom and darker tones in the dining area, for example, to give individual character to each area of the home. The result is a home that compliments nature but still puts an urban spin on the overall look.

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contemporary comfort





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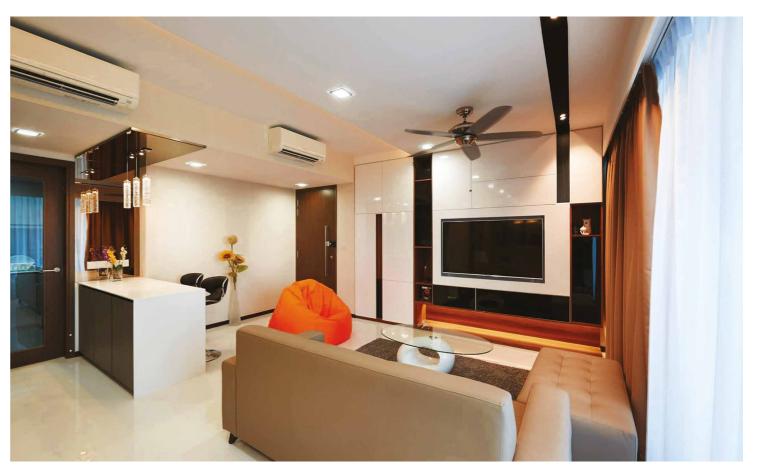
TYPE OF PROPERTY Executive Condominium

TOTAL SPACE 1300 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 6 weeks

STYLE Contemporary **OWNER** Family with 2 Kids In this contemporary renovation, a palette of neutral colours whites, creams, and browns – are complimented by bold accents like copper-toned feature walls and curtains, to create a feeling of warmth, but with a definite minimalist chic that is expressed throughout the entire home.

The choice of furniture throughout the home boasts clean, modern lines, in a choice of bold colours that create focal points in each of the living areas.

Although the living, dining and kitchen areas have been designed to encompass one continuous space, each area is visually identifiable by use of specific colour schemes and surfaces.





The kitchen is ultra-modern, accented in steel and cool greys. The dining and lounge areas use more rustic colours that are both warm and relaxing creating a comfortable atmosphere where the homeowners and their children can spend much of their time together.

Lighting features too, whether flushfitting in the ceiling, or as centre-piece pendant lamps, add character to the overall contemporary design.

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7 WAYS TO SPRUCE UP YOUR LIVING ROOM

TURN YOUR LIVING ROOM INTO A SANCTUARY THAT IT'S MEANT TO BE.

By Samantha Ecahvez



We already get enough stress and chaos at work, during daily commute, and in the environment we live in, so it's imperative that we make our home—our own haven—a peaceful retreat. Your living room, for one, should be your place of comfort and relaxation.

Here are various ways to transform your living room into a room full of life and serenity:

- 1. Take away unnecessary decor. "To transform our homes into more calming environments, the first step is to strike a balance between clear space and objects or decorations," says Juliet Pegrum, author of Peace at Home: Simple Solutions for Rooms. "The first step toward attaining this balance is to strip away all that is unnecessary in terms of decoration and material possessions." Decluttering is a total must-do to achieve a more peaceful living room.
- 2. Mind the furniture arrangement. According to Jill Vegas, author of Speed Decorating, "Proper arrangement of [furniture] pieces is what will make your room comfortable and inviting." Here's a suggestion: "Furniture, just like people, needs a little 'personal space' so it can breathe. Move the sofa just six inches from the wall to give it that space. Position the coffee table, side chair, end table, and lamps near the sofa to create a grouping. This provides a comfortable conversation area."
- 3. Add soft textures and relaxing colours. Consider neutral and warm colours to invite a cosy feel; white works as well. Make sure fabrics in the living room—cushions, rugs, throws—look and feel

soft to touch.

- 4. Display family photographs. Relaxation easily sets in when you see photos of people you hold dear.
- **5. Create a cosy corner.** Carve out a reading nook where you can sit back, read your favourite book, and enjoy the peace and quiet of your home. Opt for a plush armchair and place it by the window so you can fully enjoy the natural light coming in.
- 6. Add Zen and spa-like elements into your living room. "Spas and tropical homes tend to use the same design principles. They create calm environment that appeal to our senses. This is done using the natural interior design principle which is to bring the outside in by using as many natural materials as possible," says Diyana Nicole, author of Home Sanctuary. This means adding wood, stone grains, greenery, and even water features like a small bamboo fountain into your living room.
- 7. Create calming vignettes. "A vignette is a small, pleasing picture formed by grouping several objects — think of it as a pocket-size table arrangement that tells a story about you and your home. A vignette is a harmonious tableau made from a variety of items, rather than a large collection of similar articles (for example, clocks or toys), which would require a different display strategy," says interior design enthusiast Janet Dunn. Create one that evokes a sense of calm.

Original story from Cromly.com



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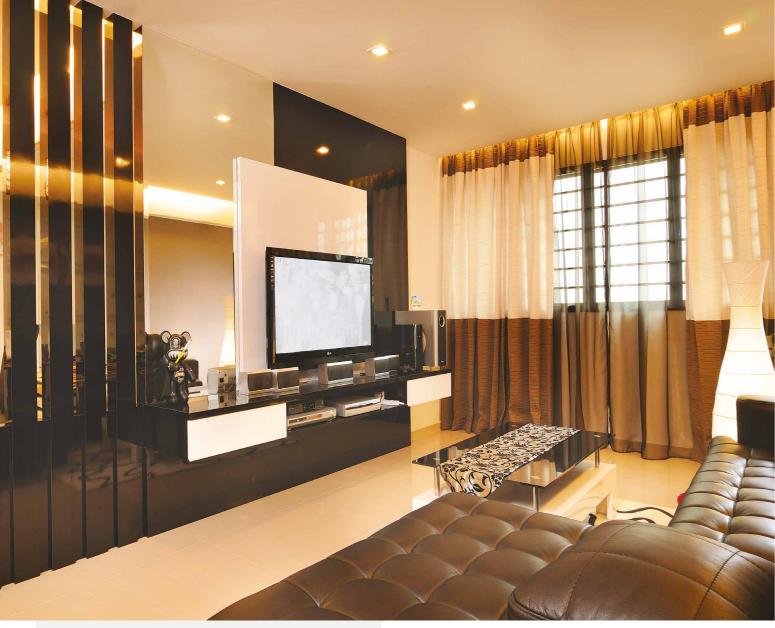
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warm and cosy





074

CASE FILE ___

TYPE OF PROPERTY HDB 5 Room TOTAL SPACE 1200 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 4 weeks STYLE Modern

OWNER Chinese

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modern executive hideaway





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY HDB 4 Room TOTAL SPACE 968 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 4 weeks

STYLE Simple Modern **OWNER** Working Executive Simplicity. This is the word that best describes this modern home renovation. Of course, simple doesn't mean boring and this decor with its clean lines, neutral colour palette and geometric shapes is anything but boring. This home is warm, inviting and completely stylish.

Simple modern design makes use of open and uncluttered spaces and home decor that is functional and built with clean lines. The living space is designed with modern decor and has ample workroom and everything should be easy to access.





Even technology works with the space, with flat panel televisions, air-conditioning units and lighting all flush-fitting and streamlined with the overall design.

The appearance of open spaces is further emphasised by using light and neutral colours in fabrics and furnishings.

Minimalist wood accents in the decor and a splash of colour here and there, which stands out from the neutral palette – also add character to the overall open and airy theme.













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classical white wonderland





TYPE OF PROPERTY BTO Punggol at Walk

TOTAL SPACE 1205 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 weeks

STYLE Modern Classic

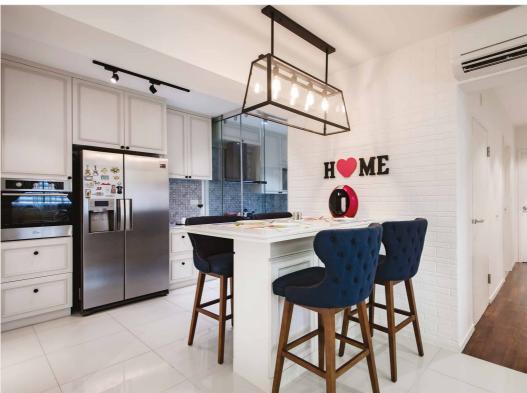
OWNER Young Family with One Child

With its origins deeply rooted in European culture, the Modern Classic style draws inspiration from the Victorian and Art Deco eras; mixing elements from both the classical and modern to create this very popular interior design style.

In this renovation, the mixtures of past and present can be seen throughout, with the use of furniture both modern and classical in design.

Colour is also an important factor in creating this blend. White dominates throughout the entire living space – and a complimenting palette of beige, brown and grey is expressed in the furnishings and decor.





Modern also means minimalist, and although there is a lot of character in the various design elements of the home, there's nothing overly showy or too flamboyant to break up the harmony of the overall style. Decoration and accessories are also kept to a minimum, thereby adding tasteful accents without cluttering up the space.

A touch of showbiz and glamour can be seen in the master bedroom, reflecting the couple's own character, and it is these personal touches that add a unique signature to the overall renovation.



















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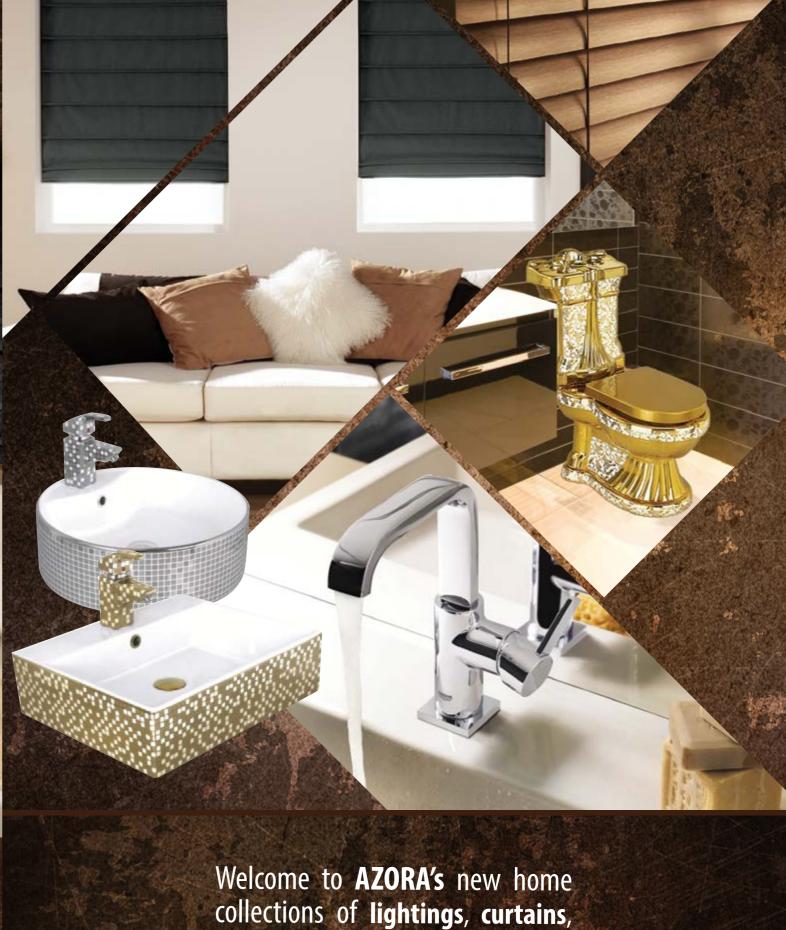
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kitchen and bathroom accessories.

large family space and style





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY HDB TOTAL SPACE 1140 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 12 weeks

STYLE Modern Contemporary

OWNER Young Family

With four sons in their family, the over-riding requirement for these homeowners was storage space – and lots of it! And yet they still wanted a stylish renovation, with clean lines and a classic white palette to form the basis of the design.

Space is achieved in every room by avoiding clutter and keeping furnishings fashionable yet functional.





Although white dominates, accents of black and muted greens and greys add further character, and in the boy's bedroom, natural wood laminates and finishings set the tone. Their double bunk-bed arrangement is custom-made and designed to fit flush against the wall.

Together with the clever use of mirrors and full-length mirror walls, the illusion of added space is achieved, and gives the home a sense of openness and fluidity.

Further brightness and illumination is created by the clever placement of flush-fitting ceiling and panel lights, and concealed lighting within wall crevices and shelving.





















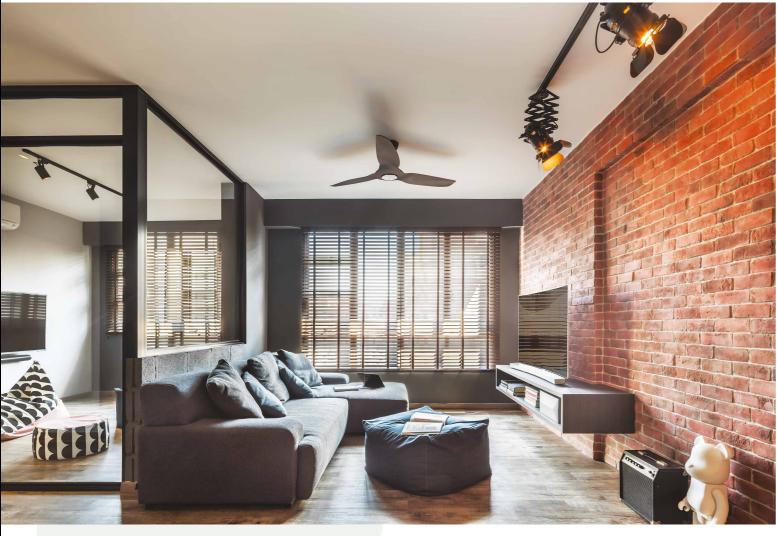




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wood and metal oasis





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY 3 Bedroom HDB TOTAL SPACE 1076 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 Weeks STYLE Eclectic-industrial

OWNER Young Couple

Industrial-style interior design is all about proudly displaying the building materials that many usually try to conceal. It's all about adding a raw, unfinished look to a stylishly designed home – with an emphasis on neutral tones, and wood and metal surfaces. And this home renovation shouts out the style in bold and brilliant details!

The overall effect is of a "warehouse look" which combines the "industrial" with other earthy and polished styles. Stainless steel surfaces, metal light fixtures and functional furniture also lend to the overall look.

Another signature element of industrial design is the presence of exposed features that people typically try and conceal, such as pipes and ducts - which have been used to great effect in the kitchen, and the custom-built centrepiece that connects it to the living area.





An abundance of wood and metal surfaces can be found throughout the apartment, and both earthy and neutral tones are used to create a balance, as we move from living room, to dining room and kitchen.

Dramatic lighting solutions, from track lighting to retractable lights draw attention to each area, and in particular, effectively highlights the roughhewn texture of the brick wall, which is the focal point of the entire space.

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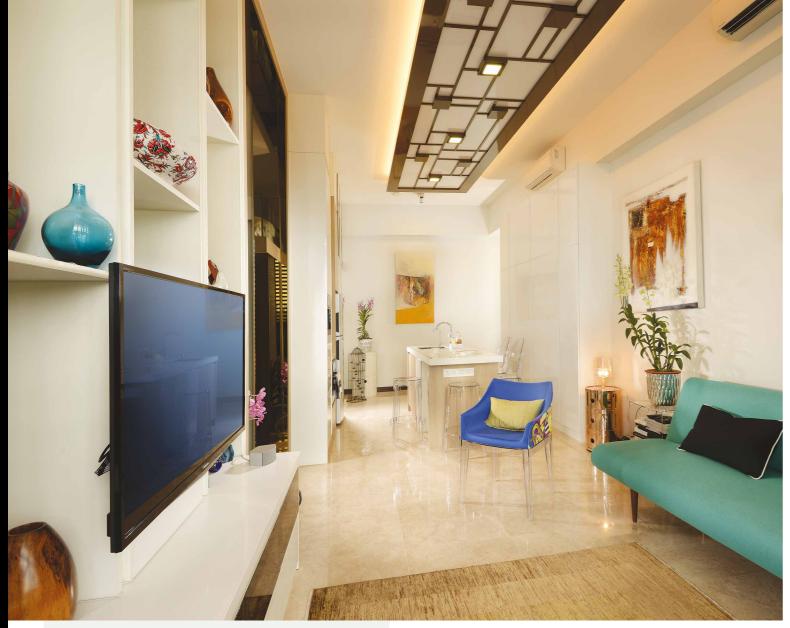






contemporary allure





CASE FILE __

TYPE OF PROPERTY Studio Apartment The Hillier Condo

TOTAL SPACE 624 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 3 weeks **DESIGN STYLE** Art Deco **OWNER** Mother and son

One of the condo unit's main attractions is the open-plan layout which accommodates the kitchen and the living room.

Contemporary with hints of art deco—this best describes this condo unit designed by Inspire ID Group for a mother and son tandem. It features dramatic cove lighting, visually light furniture pieces, and art deco panels and prints. Sleek shelving and glossy surfaces complete the modern chic look.



The kitchen is a picture of efficiency with its highly functional island and dine-in area; the living room, furnished with vibrant and colourful furniture pieces and accessories, is a real head-turner.

Kitchen cabinet @\$90 per foot run & **Quartz countertop** for kitchen @\$45 per foot run

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GUIDE TO BETTER BATHROOMS

BATHS ARE MAGICAL. THEY HAVE A WAY OF SUPER-SIZING YOUR CONFIDENCE AND WRAPPING YOU UP IN KNEE-WEAKENING HAPPINESS. REALLY. THEY'RE THE BEST.

By Samantha Echavez





Which brings us to the point that your bathroom must be built to accommodate luxurious and sensational baths. You know, the types that we get to experience in swanky hotels, resorts, and spas—baths that delicious dreams are made of. Bathrooms where you can just see yourself lazily floating in your tub with roses on the floor and a glass of sparkling wine in your hand. Before you even tell us that we're here to dash your hopes because really, who has time and energy to stage the bathroom of his dreams, keep calm and read on. Overhauling your bathroom is not as hard and ambitious as it sounds. Here are some tips:

Clean it. Perform an honest-to-goodness, back-breaking cleaning. Scout for a heavy-duty disinfectant and scrub your toilet bowl. Dust the medicine cabinet. Sanitise surface areas with scrubbing powder. Wipe your grouts clean. Clean your bathroom for hours until it becomes so spotless and shiny that you would actually say to yourself, "Whoa! So this is how my bathroom is supposed to look like..."

Declutter better. Make your bathroom easy on the eyes. Get rid of clutter, like ratty washcloths, empty bottles that topple over and land on the floor at the slightest breeze, musty towels you keep for sentimental reasons. Edit the products on your countertops. At least one of the surface areas in your bathroom should be free of toiletries.

Fix 'til it's fine. You will never enjoy your newly cleaned, freshly decluttered bathroom if the shower heater no longer works or the toilet flush is busted. Make sure everything is in perfect order. Have a budget? You can go for updates, like changing the faucet and replacing the shower head.

Organise wisely. Shop for storage pieces to keep small items, like jewellery, rubber bands, and cotton buds.

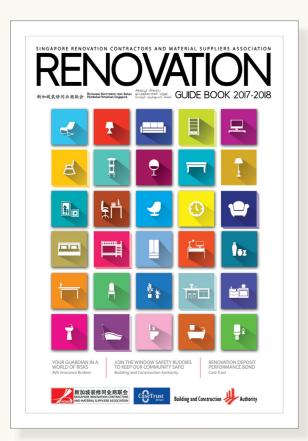
Say spaaah. Look back at a time you visited the spa and were so impressed at the furnishings and ambience. It was so clean and wondrous and refreshing, wasn't it? Score the same rejuvenating vibe by filling your bathroom with luxury toiletries or displaying potpourri and scented candles in the room. Fresh flowers work, too!

Do as the hoteliers do. Invest in fluffy designer towels, install flattering lights, and if you can afford to place a chandelier in the bathroom, why the heck not? Chandeliers soften the usually sterile feel of a bathroom, making it look more dreamy and romantic.

Mind the littlest things. The seemingly small things in your bathroom (like bath mat, arsenal of cleaning materials) should count, too! Every detail matters—ideally no run-of-the-mill stuff in your dream bathroom!

 $Original\ story\ from\ Cromly.com$

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HOW TO MAKE YOUR HOME ECO-SUSTAINABLE

REDUCING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT STARTS AT HOME.

By Martin Cuyegkeng



Carbon footprints are normally associated with motorists; hence, the popularisation of biking to work and electric cars. Saving Mother Nature, however, does not have to begin when we step outside our front door. In fact, becoming environmentally friendly can actually start even before we leave our homes. Reversing the effects of climate change is quite challenging and a big feat to accomplish; heck, we might not even be able to reverse it in our

lifetime. But reducing its effects is actually manageable. With all that's said and done, we have to start somewhere. And a good place to start is in our homes.

Here are some steps that we can take to help make the world environmentally sustainable one house at a time.

Energy-saving bulbs

Here's a bright idea: Replace your incandescent lights with energy-saving bulbs. Two of the popular lights that are being used in most homes right now are LED and CFL. They do not only help conserve energy consumption, they also last longer than regular incandescent bulbs. It may require an investment on your part, as LED bulbs are generally more expensive, but if it means cutting back on your energy use, then we'd say it's an investment worth making.

Extension Cord

Use extension cords with individual switches per socket. Some appliances, even when switched off, still consume energy. So having extensions cords with individual switches allows you to completely cut off electricity. Either that or you literally unplug the appliance you are not using.

Low Flow Showerhead

Shower the environment with love by using less water when you take a bath. Just by simply replacing your showerhead with a low-flowing one, you are already doing Mother Nature a favour. Partner that with a shorter shower time, you're actually washing away some of the carbon footprints you're unconsciously making.

Refrigerator

Replacing your old refrigerator with a current and energy efficient model is ideal. But in case you can't buy a new one, try replacing its position in your kitchen. Putting it in direct sunlight or in a warmer area of your kitchen requires the refrigerator to churn more energy to keep cool. Try to relay out your kitchen and make sure that the refrigerator is positioned in the coolest spot.

Non-Toxic Home Cleaners

Let's be frank. You wouldn't want any toxins going in your body. Think of how Mother Nature feels. Yes, it might be a little more expensive to use eco-friendly home cleaners. But if you think about it, you're not only keeping toxins out of nature, you're also keeping it out of your home, your loved ones, and yourself, too. It's a win-win situation if you look at it. And in case you didn't know, you can pretty much use readily available and natural ingredients found in your kitchen to clean things at home.

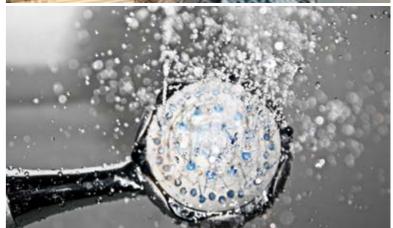
Solar Panels

Installing solar panels to your house may be a radical (and costly) move. But the benefits to having them far outweigh the consequences—like cutting back tremendously on your energy bill. If this is something you can afford, then go ahead and do it!

Original story from Cromly.com







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10 WAYS TO GO GREEN AT HOME

DO YOUR PART IN SAVING THE WORLD — CREATE A HEALTHIER AND ECO-FRIENDLIER HOME.

By Lana Hawkins



One of the most important initiatives of our time is going green and promoting ecological awareness, a sustainable lifestyle, and a more proactive approach towards saving Mother Nature. A number of companies have already started using recyclable materials in their production and limiting the usage of harmful or dangerous chemicals that affect the atmosphere. Now, even the average homeowner can also contribute to this cause by decorating his home in accordance with green home philosophy that combines using eco-friendly home items, reducing energy consumption, and filling your space with flowers and plants.

- 1. Energy. Your electric bill will be much lower if you use compact fluorescent lamps and LED bulbs rather than conventional incandescent bulb fixtures. Also, remember to turn off lights and electric devices when you are not using them. You can also try to use less water, or at least use hot water, when you are showering or brushing your teeth as this will help reduce your electric and water bill.
- **2. Light.** Try to introduce more natural light to your house. It is best if your house has lots of windows from where the sun can reach through. Other than that, you can always install big windows over

half of your walls or even a half-glass ceiling. This will look quite modern and hip—plus, you will end up saving energy.

- **3. Green Wall.** Even though the green wall idea has been around for over 70 years, only recently has it become more popular and recognised on a global scale. Its main concept—filling an entire wall or a part of it with plants—is interesting to eco-friendly enthusiasts and homeowners who are looking for unusual decorating ideas and solutions.
- **4. Rainwater.** Follow what a lot of people have been doing for a long time now: reusing rainwater for watering gardens. You just need a big barrel in which you can collect water for your flowers and plants. Not only are you saving precious water, you are also saving money on your bill.
- **5. Indoor Plants.** Besides being an extraordinary addition to your home, indoor plants can also provide you with fresher air and serve as a layer of insulation that cancels the noise and regulates the inside temperature. You can introduce plants and flowers into your home and enrich the air indoors—these plants can be installed on a panel or tray system and maintained like any outside plant.
- **6. Decoration.** When it comes to decorating your home, there are plenty of ways to do it in a greener way. Reuse, repurpose, recycle. Reuse old items like crates to make shelves, or just take some old jars, repaint them, and use them for decoration or storing some small valuables.
- **7. Furniture.** Do you know that you can help the planet by choosing the right furniture? You can promote sustainability by opting for natural instead of fabricated materials. This is especially true for natural outdoor furniture made from certified wood or bamboo, and are non-toxic and fire retardant-free.
- **8. Paper.** Be very strict about the amount of paper you use. Try to always use both sides of paper. Also, when having dinner with friends and family, use cloth napkins. Try to use microfiber cloths instead of paper towels. You can also switch to biodegradable toilet paper—remember, it's the little things that count.
- **9. DIY.** You can always try to make your own sheets, linen, curtains, or pillow cases from scratch. Try sewing or knitting—it is a fun and creative way to go green.
- **10. Products.** When it comes to products you use at your home, whether they are beauty products, toiletries, or cleaning products, try to go organic and natural. A number of commercial products sold in stores are filled with toxic chemicals that are not only bad for the environment but also for your health. You can also experiment and DIY these products. Homemade soap, anyone?

Indeed, if more people change their approach and choose ecofriendlier options, the effect on the planet will be more visible and will help us all.

Original story from Cromly.com







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12 EDIBLE GARDENS TO GROW IN YOUR GARDEN

HARVEST FRESH FOOD FROM YOUR VERY OWN GARDEN

By Jerni Camposano



"Why grow your own food? Because then you get to eat it, of course! Growing your own food is rewarding. All it takes is time, patience, soil, water, and sunshine!" exclaims Katherine Hengel in Cool Basil from Garden to Table.

According to urban farmer and HDB herb gardening advocate Balan Gopal, each herb has its own personality and behavioural pattern. It will be easier to work on each one once you understand its characteristics. "The joy of growing your own herbs and then snipping them off and cooking them...it is a brand new experience that you have to experience yourself to find out what it's all about," he says.

But what to plant? Here are 12 must-have herbs to grow in your 3. Thyme. garden—and how you can enjoy each of them after harvest.

Love tomato-based food such as pasta and pizza? It's time to start growing basil!

"Basil is best known as a companion to tomatoes—spaghetti sauce, fresh or cooked, sliced tomatoes, pizza. Anything that combines the two is delightful," say Judy Barrett and Victor Z. Martin in What Can I Do with My Herbs?: How to Grow, Use, and Enjoy These Versatile Plants. Another healthy reason to grow basil? Pesto!

A popular garnish in dinner plates and salads, parsley is an almost universal herb and is often used in Mediterranean dishes. "It blends well with most other flavors and adds a mildly spicy taste of its own. You can snip it into sauces, butter, dressings, or just about any other dish," explain Barrett and Martin.

Even though its leaves are small, the taste of thyme is large so it should be used sparingly. "Harvest anytime for use in the kitchen. English thyme is the most popular for cooking... lemon thyme is particularly useful in teas and in fish dishes," explain Toby Bost and Bob Polomski in Carolinas Gardener's Handbook: All You Need to Know to Plan, Plant & Maintain a Carolinas Garden.

4. Chives.

This is one herb you can use more frequently to season your dishes. You've come across this herb in a number of soup menus during your fancy dine outs. Salmon or corn chowder with chives, anyone?

5. Tarragon.

It's a flexible herb—you can eat it (include in your salad), use to season (thanks to its peppery-like flavour) and garnish dishes (use in herbal butter, salad dressings, or with chicken), or drink it (make a hot or iced tea with it).

6. Oregano.

"Popular in Mediterranean, Indian, and Southwestern cooking, easily grown in diverse conditions and available in so many colorful and flavorful varieties, oregano is a staple in most cupboards," explains Carolee Snyder, author of Herbal Choices: A Gardening Novel With Herbal Recipes.

7. Lavender.

Called the "Queen of the Scented Garden," this easy-to-grow herb is a good complement for savoury dishes and sweet desserts. Aside from its aromatherapy benefits, it can be made into tea, which is known to relieve stress and calm one down.

8. Peppermint.

With its fresh, lively taste, peppermints are used as table decorations as well as for flavouring food and enlivening salad dishes. According to Barrett and Martin, "peppermint is the strongest of the mints. Some people drink peppermint tea to soothe an upset stomach."

9. Cilantro/coriander.

You plant coriander seeds and harvest cilantro (the green leaves). If you find your sour cream too boring, then add chopped coriander for that extra kick. Also, throwing in some of this herb toward the end of your stir-fry will leave a strong fresh flavour to your dish.

10. Rosemary.

Oh, how do we count the ways we can use this pungent herb in the kitchen! You can use its sprigs to make flavoured olive oil, add flavour to your rib-eye steak, or throw into your roasted potatoes. The list is endless—just look at French and Italian cuisines.

11. Sage.

"A robust flavour, sage is best used where you can really taste it, such as Feta and Sage Relish, or else as part of a bouquet of herbs in a stew or stock. Sage is a wonderful healer, perfect with lots of honey for sore throat, the flu, or colds," advise Chupi and Luke Sweetman in What to Eat When You Can't Eat Anything: The Complete Allergy Cookbook.

12. Lemon Balm.

The lemon-scented member of the mint family can be used "fresh, frozen, or preserved in oil, wine, or vinegar to impart a fresh, lemony flavour to various dishes," say Bost and Polomski.









maximum form & function





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY 4 Room HDB TOTAL SPACE 1001 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 5 weeks

STYLE Contemporary Style **OWNER** Young Couple with 2 Kids Storage space was the main driving force behind this renovation. With two young children, this family needed as much storage as possible in their home – without having to sacrifice style or living

In keeping with the contemporary style, this design employs neutral tones, such as white, cream, beige, and greys. These colours create a bright and clean environment, lighting up each room and creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Furniture too includes polished surfaces, light colours and natural materials like wood and glass. Fabrics in natural materials like cotton and silk, add bold accents throughout the home.





In each room, storage is cleverly hidden away in fitted cupboards and flush-fitting storage units, which blend seamlessly with the walls.

Floors and walls work together to create a sense of openness and space. Clean white walls and wood laminate or stone flooring are also easy to keep clean with energetic kids running around!

A 5% rebate on confirmed contract for

bathroom accessories light fittings purchases.

*T&C applies.















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luxurious grandeur





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY Semi-Detached House TOTAL SPACE 4800 sq ft

TIME TO COMPLETE 4 weeks

STYLE Modern Luxury **OWNER** Businessman

This very classical renovation is the epitome of grand luxury, taking its cues from Luxurious design throughout.

From the bedroom, to the dining room and into the living space, this businessman's home is filled to the brim with statement pieces, like the elegant leather and marble furniture, prominent paintings and even luxurious leather trims adorning the walls.

This home is very much a reflection of its owner – the various materials and finishes chosen and incorporated into the design according to his exact specifications.

It's an eclectic mix – although the overall base is minimalist, the remainder is filled with details that stand out and really take this décor to a whole new level.





The apartment features a variety of elements that, instead of clashing, combine harmoniously and result in a very beautiful mix.

As for the colour palette, and in keeping with the Luxury theme, the vast majority of the home is white. The monotony is broken up by gold elements that put further emphasis on this glamorous, luxurious look.

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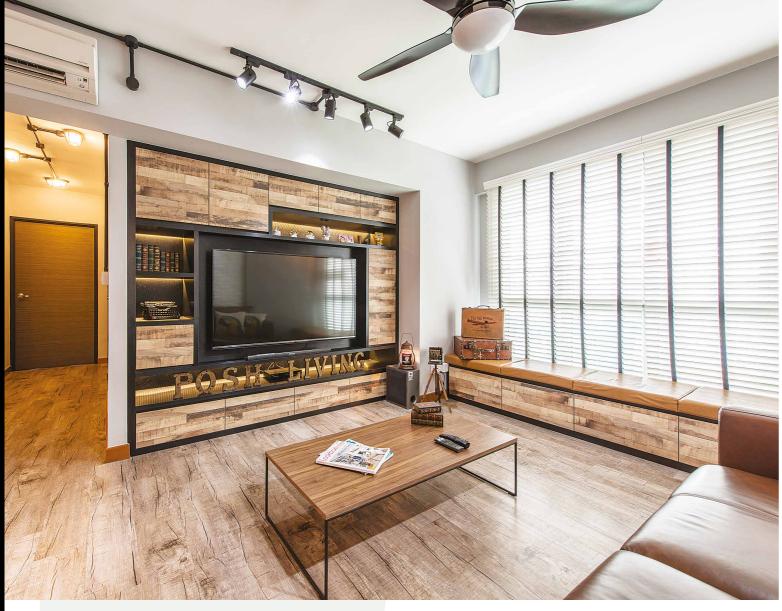




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industrial chic expression





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY 4 Room BTO at Punggol Waterway Brooks

TOTAL SPACE 1000 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 4 weeks STYLE Industrial **OWNER** Working Executive

What other design styles go to great lengths to hide - industrial design boldly puts on display.

If there was one surface in this space that could be considered the definition of industrial design, it would be the ceiling. Bare beams and pipes add interest and visual dimension against a surface that is as good as invisible in other design styles.

Warm, neutral colours have been used in this industrially designed space, which is large and open. These hues help to bring visual warmth to the area, which might otherwise be overwhelmed by the coolness of metal pipes and ducts.





The textural interplay of grainy, earthy wood and smooth, lustrous metal is a prominent feature, with added contrast and warmth being brought into the design by the use of timber floors. The presence of metal is extended by selecting highsheen steel or chrome accents in the kitchen and for light fixtures.

This industrial style also features walls in brick and similar veneers, which have become an amazing centrepiece in the re-styled





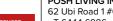












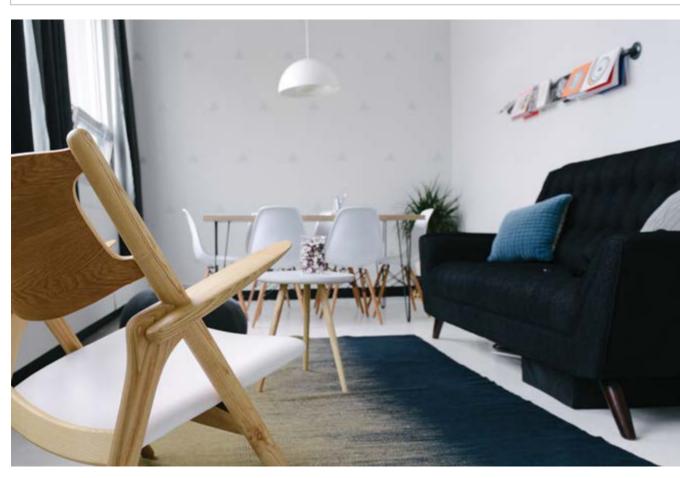
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LIVING LARGE IN SMALL SPACES

SUPERSIZE THE STYLE OF SMALL SPACES — EXERTS TELL US HOW.

by Samantha Echavez



There are so many ways to jazz up a small space, create the illusion that it is bigger than it appears, and turn it into a cosy and relaxing sanctuary. Here are 25 tips from experts who believe that styling a small space guarantees big and beautiful results:

- 1. Think small = think positive. "The first step in thinking 'small' is to think positive. The high market value of space has a tendency to reinforce the view that a small area is necessarily substandard, second best. This, in turn, tends to obscure the many advantages, both practical and psychological, that small spaces can offer. Practically speaking, small spaces are generally more cost-effective to run and maintain in terms of heating, lighting, and cleaning," says Terence Conran, author of Small Spaces: Inspiring Ideas.
- 2. Know your home. Says Elizabeth Wilhide, author of Small

Spaces: Maximizing Limited Spaces: "First things first: know your home. Small space living means every centimetre counts. An essential part of the planning process is working out exactly how much space you have and how it is arranged so you can think about ways of improving it. Good small space design is holistic, not piecemeal. To help yourself get grip on the big picture, it is worth taking detailed measurements of every area and making a sketch plan, marking on details and features such as windows and where power points are located."

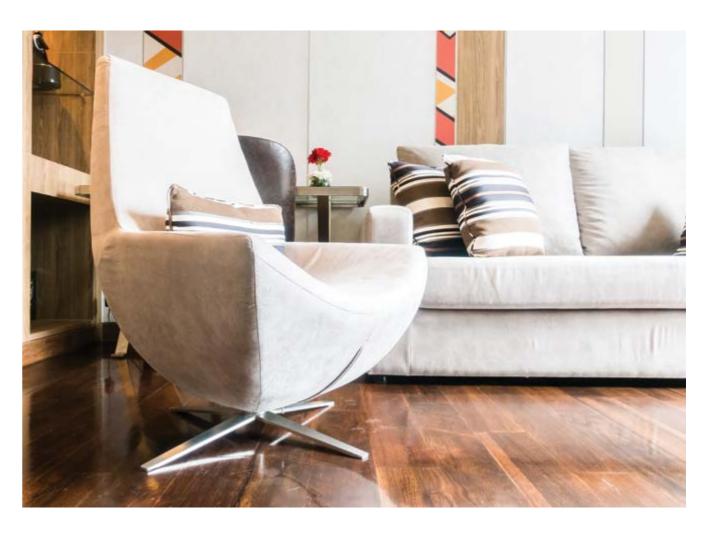
- **3. Set your priorities.** "The next step is to work out where your priorities lie," adds Wilhide. "What is more important to you—having a garden or entertaining, a generous kitchen or a home office?"
- 4. Open up the interior as far as possible to enhance the quality of space...but know if the walls to be hacked away are

load-bearing or not. "If you knock down a wall or two, you won't win much in the way of floor area per se, but the effect will be immediately expansive. The complexity (and expense) of the work will be determined by whether or not the wall or walls in question are load-bearing. A load-bearing wall plays an integral role in the structure of a building—remove it and you will have to put a compensatory element in its place, such as a steel joist. Partition walls, which are simply spatial dividers, can be taken down with impunity. If you are in any doubt about which walls are structural and which are not, consult a surveyor, engineer or architect," says Wilhide.

- **5. Double the purpose of a room.** Wilhide goes on to explain that "where floor area is limited, there may be the need for a certain amount of doubling up, which often means building in flexibility so that different activities can be accommodated within the same multipurpose area."
- **6. Plan your layout.** "Layouts are as simple as measuring your room and all of your furniture, recording this information on a piece of paper, and moving the furniture around until you have the most effective positioning," says Libby Langdon, author of Libby Langdon's Small Scale Solutions.
- **7. Skip short shelving and cabinetry.** According to Langdon, "Using full-scale shelves and cabinets that go all the way up to

the ceiling visually draw the eye upward, making the ceiling seem higher and space larger."

- **8. Colour your walls.** White walls are known for enlarging a space but "they lack personality. Spice up your space, have a little fun, and paint some colour on your walls," adds Langdon.
- **9. Go back to your floor plan** and "place the largest pieces of furniture first to signify the premier activity centre of the room's focal point: a great view or a television," says Kimberley Seldon, author of 500 Ideas for Small Spaces.
- **10.** For bedrooms, consider sliding doors. "A sliding door is the perfect way of providing a tiny bedroom with the necessary intimacy and sense of seclusion but without the door taking up valuable floor space on opening," explains Sara Emslie, author of Beautifully Small: Style Solutions for Small Spaces.
- 11. Keep the bathroom open and breezy. "Overly compartmentalized rooms appear smaller, while open spaces create the illusion of size. To maintain an open view, trade in a traditional shower curtain for clear-glass doors. Continue the bath flooring into the shower to amplify the effect," says Samantha S. Thorpe of 100 Decorating Ideas: Big Style for Small Rooms.



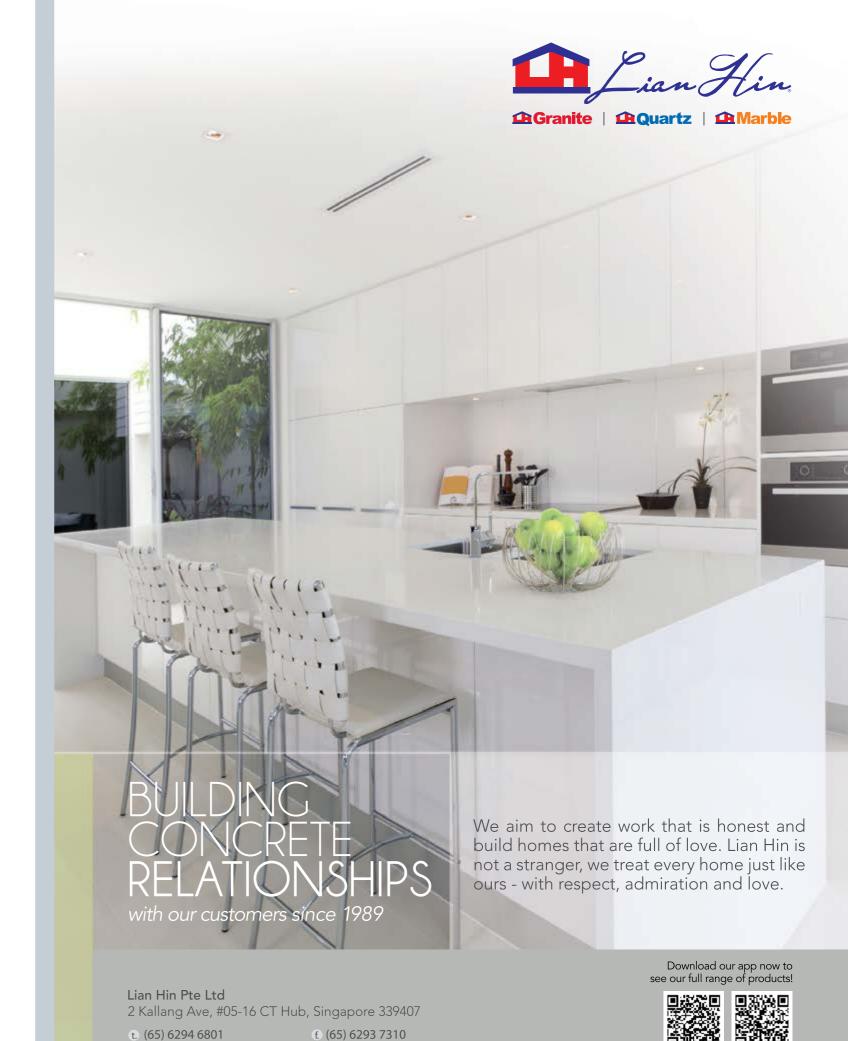
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- 12. "Don't assume that all the furniture has to be pushed up against a wall, because that usually leaves an enormous open area in the middle of the room," says Langdon.
- **13.** "Try moving furniture around—a new position frequently brings a new perspective," says Seldon.
- **14. Refrain from using all wood furniture.** "It makes a room feel clunky and bottom heavy but by mixing in glass-topped tables with wood pieces you give your room a lighter, airier, and more open feel," explains Langdon.
- 15. Don't be afraid of large furniture. Says Thorpe: "It may sound counterintuitive but a few oversize furnishings can make a small space appear larger, while too many small pieces can create a claustrophobic feeling." When it comes to buying sofa, remember this tip from Seldon: "It's preferable to choose an ample two-seat sofa rather than a small three-seat sofa. The slightly smaller sofa allows room for an end table."
- 16. Appliances should also serve more than one purpose.
- "Make your appliances multi-task! The hand mixer that does double-duty as a blender and the can opener that also works as a knife sharpener are valuable kitchen space-savers," says Tara McLellan, author of Small Spaces, Beautiful Kitchens. "The key word to remember when buying appliances or weeding out old ones? Edit, edit, edit."
- 17. "Small space living doesn't have to be short on style," reminds Wilhide. "A Venetian mirror and marble worktop and backsplash add a touch of glamour to a tiny kitchen and bathroom."
- **18.** Think: solid fabrics and simple patterns. "To create comfort in a small living room, choose solid fabrics and use simple patterns for accent pieces. This provides the space with 'breathing room' reducing visual chaos," says Seldon.

- 19. Don't keep things boring. "Neutral furnishings and walls reflect light, making a small space seem larger. But going neutral doesn't have to equal safe and boring. Add a few colourful accessories, such as a painted table and boldly embroidered pillows, for a pop of personality," says Thorpe.
- **20. Skip small-scale accessories.** "Large lamps, artwork, candles, vases, and accessories create the appearance of greater space and more height," says Langdon.
- **21.** Say goodbye to clutter. According to Langdon, "holding onto too much stuff and not throwing away clutter can make even a space feel small, so when in doubt, throw it out."
- **22. Match the draperies with the hues of the walls.** Thorpe advises, "To make the boundaries of a room disappear, flank windows with draperies that match the hue of the walls."
- **23. Don't use small area rugs.** "A small area rug can look like a postage stamp and make your room feel cramped but using a large rug creates an extended visual line and gives the illusion of more square footage," says Langdon.
- **24. Stick to stripes.** "Stretch the visual height of a room with vertical stripes. Bold black stripes on the draperies of a living room draw all eyes upward," says Thorpe.
- **25. Be generous with lights.** Langdon says that "not lighting your space effectively makes it look smaller. Capitalising on natural light and bringing in artificial light is imperative." You can even add a chandelier, "which is large in proportion to the space it illuminates, [thus making] a dramatic statement," says Thorpe.

Original story from Cromly.com



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GUIDE: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INTERIOR DESIGNERS, CONTRACTORS, & DESIGN-&-BUILDS

INTERIOR DESIGNER, RENOVATION CONTRACTOR, INTERIOR RENOVATOR -LEARN ABOUT THE MANY DIFFERENCES BENEATH THESE NAMES AND BE CLEAR ON THE KIND OF RENOVATION/DESIGN SETUP YOU ARE ENGAGING.

By Xiangyun Lim

starts. It's crucial to find the right people to work with whom you can trust and afford, but how do you choose? The search lack of clear distinctions between designers and contractors, along with a new breed of design-and-build setups that tout for services they may not be fully equipped to provide.

Being able to discern renovation/design setups will prevent a nasty working relationship and rude shocks during the process. They may describe themselves as everything from "interior

Renovating your house can be stressful - even before construction renovator" and "renovation contractors" to "design consultancy", but these phrases can only be guidelines to the kind of services offered. Do remember that renovation is not just about the end to engage reliable interior designers is further muddled by the product - the process is just as important to preserving your sanity and preventing rude shocks after you hand over your cash.

> After trawling renovation forums and blogs, and talking to many interior designers and homeowners, we have uncovered these differences that can help you differentiate and determine what kind of services you are engaging and should expect.





DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INTERIOR DESIGNERS, CONTRACTORS, AND DESIGN-AND BUILDS

	Interior Designer	Contractor	Design-and-Build
What do they do?	One way to look at interior designers: They are "design consultants". They will be with you from designing, to sourcing for contractors and materials, and through construction. They will do project management, and sometimes even aid in decoration. Charges based on their consultancy services	There are two kinds: the Main Contractor and Subcontractors. The main contractor works with various subcontractors according to the services needed: electrical wiring; piping; false ceiling; carpentry. May not include project management. Charges based on construction services; more executioners than advisors	This is the in-between where things get murkier and less distinctive. Some may be main contractors or project managers, who "add" design and client management to their repertoire of services. However, as designing is outsourced, you may realise that you are dealing with different people who "project manage" and do "sales", instead of an individual interior designer. Charges based on construction services.
Company Profile	Upfront about certifications and awards. Portfolios may include commercial and even architectural projects. Company description and ethos are often design-focused.	May or may not have a website, especially if it's a subcontractor (if they're good, they probably don't need it anyway).	Carry different descriptions including "interior renovators" and "interior designers". May have accreditations to show - but remember that accreditations are not formal credentials.
Timeline	Expect a lot of meetings and interviews before actual designing even starts - this may take up to two months. This is for the team to get to know you and what you want better before embarking on design. Generally, this option will require a longer timeline.	If you are engaging subcontractors on your own, you will be the one planning different timelines and process. For example, carpentry can only start after the basics of wiring and piping are done.	As many design-and- build setups see from a construction perspective, the timeline is also usually based on the construction process. Consultations and site visits help them to understand the level of renovations required.
Design	Designs according to your family's lifestyles and needs, and produces 3D drawings and floor plans. May have a certain "style" or "flair".	Builds according to the provided design. Homeowners have to be clear on what they want and provide specifications.	"Free consultations" and sitevisits may result in design plans and 3D drawings. Design-wise, design-and-builds may offer more template designs.
Budget	As sourcing for contractors and materials starts only after a confirmed design, the final budget can only be calculated thereafter. The homeowner will be the one making the final choice of contractors based on the designer's sourced quotations.	This is often the cheapest option as you are paying directly for execution. However, rectification costs due to design hiccups - which may be higher risk without professional design and experience - can add up to be much pricier than expected.	It is common to start with renovation "packages", but it is also common to have this initial cost growing with new services and requested changes.

	Interior Designer	Contractor	Design-and-Build	
Project Management	Included in their services	Requires self project management	Included in their services	
Building and Construction	Will work with the chosen contractor and subcontractors to ensure each detail fits into the design	Do not expect them to proactively give practical advice or correct design-related mistakes; they may just go ahead even if it's not a good fit.	Will have their own subcontractors and material sources. Beware of recommendations that are not based on quality, but for other reasons, such as stock-clearing or a commission-based relationship with the supplier.	
Service	A mark of good service would be proactive updates from the engaged designer, as well as willingness to rectify problems that occur after renovations and move-in.	Don't be surprised to meet contractors who are upfront and offer no lip service. They may not be as patient to entertain whimsical queries, but are straightforward in their approach.	A mark of good service would be proactive updates from the engaged project manager, as well as willingness to rectify problems that occur after renovations and move-in.	
What to look out for	Even if the firm has good reviews, do remember that firms employ many designers - not all whom you may find suitable. Try to seek the name of the designers recommended for more assurance, and always meet them to find one you are comfortable with.	If you're taking on the task of engaging individual subcontractors yourself, do remember that there are times when you may need different services done together - for example, kitchen cabinets that have water pipes running through them.	Even though project management is done by design-and-builds, there is the risk of slipshod work that come as rude shocks if homeowners are not constantly on site to supervise. The resulting rectifications then become additional costs, or trouble only discovered after moving in.	
Conclusion	More suitable for those who place priority on design and service, and may not have the time to project manage.	More suitable for those who not just have experience and time, but also relatively simple construction and designs to execute.	More suitable for those tighter on time and budget, and/or are looking at a more basic design style.	

SO, HOW DO YOU CHOOSE?

- Do be clear on your priorities. Is it time, budget, design, or quality? This will help focus your search.
- Always, always do your research. Start early. Ask those with experiences, both good and bad. Trawl forums and reviews.
- Keep in mind that everyone's needs are different even those with raving reviews might not be able to meet your expectations, or be who you feel most comfortable with.
- If you have shortlisted a few, meet up with all of them personally. Ask detailed questions and clear all doubts before you commit to one.

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NO BUDGET NO PROBLEM: HOW TO CHANGE YOUR ROOM'S LOOK WITHOUT SPENDING A SINGLE DOLLAR

SUPERSIZE THE STYLE OF SMALL SPACES—EXPERTS TELL US HOW.

By Camille Besinga



Sometimes, when a room's been looking the way it has for years, it tends to feel stale and boring. A simple furniture rearrangement will help refresh its look, as well as improve its flow. Here are some tips to get you started on this weekend project.

- 1. Determine the room's function, as that will dictate the flow in, out, and around the room. Ask yourself these questions: Will it be used to work in, eat in, relax in, play in? This way, you know what the focal point or main piece of furniture will be, i.e., bed in a bedroom, TV in a media room, a desk in a study or home office.
- 2. Sketch various layout options on paper, or use a program or app (Try Floor Plan Creator and Inard Floor Plan for Android; Magicplan and Room Planner for IOS) to help you do so. In order to do this, you must measure the space and the furniture that you plan to put in it.



3. Move everything out of the room to get a sense of the space. Then, look at what furniture you have: Get rid of what you don't need, or try to choose a few big items to anchor the space. Then accessorise accordingly.

- 4. If the room has a focal point, consider arranging furniture diagonally, to draw the eye towards the focal point.
- **5. Float furniture away from walls.** This creates a better flow by identifying walk spaces and sitting spaces.
- 6. In narrow rooms, pushing furnishings onto the walls creates
- 7. Define areas in open spaces by grouping related furnishings to face each other.

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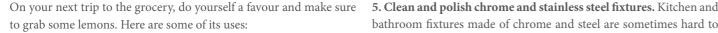


8 AMAZING USES FOR LEMON AROUND YOUR HOME

THIS ALL-NATURAL HOUSEHOLD "TOOL" CAN BE USED IN SO MANY GENIUS WAYS.

By Jerni Camposano





- **1. Natural home freshener.** Keep your home free from disgusting odours by filling a pot with water and adding sliced lemons, sprigs of rosemary, and half a teaspoon of vanilla. Just let this concoction simmer and voila, your home will be smelling heavenly all day long!
- **2. Avoid oxidation of fruits and vegetables.** Serving fruits and vegetables for a dinner party? When you need to prepare them early, you always worry about oxidation (the discolouration that occurs after they're exposed to the air). Stop the darkening by squeezing a few drops of lemon juice on the cut portions of fruits and vegetables.
- **3.** Clean the microwave in under 30 seconds. You need not go through great lengths to make your microwave oven sparkly again. Keep it clean and smelling fresh by allowing the steam of lemon juice to sit in your microwave before wiping it with a cloth.
- **4. Deodorise wooden kitchen utensils.** You're using them to cook your food so it's just right you rid them of unpleasant smell. Using a s ponge, rub them with the pulp of half a lemon and they're instantly deodorised.



- 5. Clean and polish chrome and stainless steel fixtures. Kitchen and bathroom fixtures made of chrome and steel are sometimes hard to clean and maintain. Get some help from lemon. Rub cut lemon onto the chrome fixtures until stains are gone.
- **6.** Whiten clothes. Lemons also aid in your laundry as it is a great bleach alternative. The citric acid in lemons can remove stains. Just add a cup of lemon juice together with your detergent to your load of wash
- **7. Get rid of ants.** Fight these pesky crawlers from taking over your home with a lemon juice solution. Ants hate the scent of citrus fruits so feel free to spray the solution on areas you want off-limits to ants.
- **8.** Keep cats away from your plants. Similarly, cats hate the smell of lemons. If you want to prevent them from going near your plants (and destroying them), place cut lemon skin mixed with coffee grounds on the soil of your plants.

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GUIDE ON LIFT USAGE

Unless climbing the stairs is part of your daily cardio routine, I am sure most of us dread having to trudge up the stairs to get home. That is when lifts come to the rescue!

Lifts are truly an engineering marvel but unfortunately, we have come to take them for granted. We do not handle them as well as we should either.

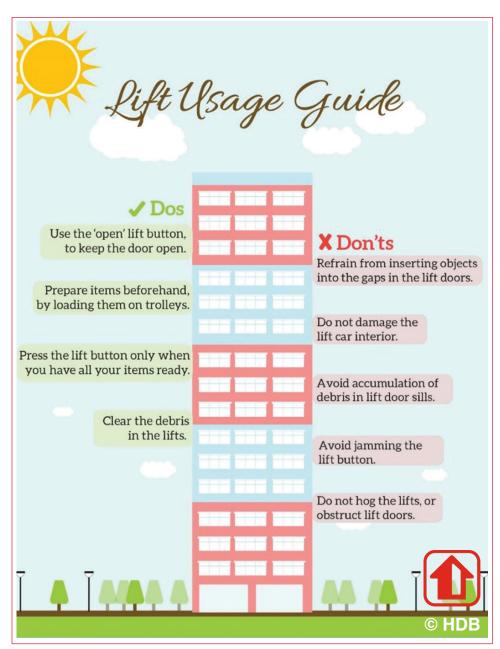
Most of the time, lifts malfunction because of improper usage – jamming the lift buttons, obstructing the lift doors or dropping stuff into the door sills are among the thoughtless acts that we subject the lifts to. .

With a little care, we can help keep the lifts in good working condition, so that they can serve us through the daily 'ups and downs' of our lives. To minimise inconvenience to ourselves and our fellow neighbours, check out our lift usage guide. Also, share them with your renovation contractors so that they will use the lifts correctly when transporting bulky items up or down your flat.

Source: www.mynicehome.sg

Article & Photos Courtesy of

Housing & Development Board



scandinavian minimalist

vest be reas interior



CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY 3-bedroom Condominium

TOTAL SPACE 1200 sa ft TIME TO COMPLETE 4 weeks

> STYLE Scandinavian Design **OWNER** 3 Adults, 1 Child

Minimalism, functionality and a simple yet complimentary colour scheme are the keys to this very modern renovation.

Calm, muted tones of cool greys, whites and creams are seen everywhere. This colour scheme has become the trademark of Scandinavian design and are characteristic of Scandinavian minimalism.

But that doesn't mean there shouldn't be room for a stand-out design statements either – as can be seen in the bold wooden wall and ceiling feature that frames the TV console in the living room, and the wooden veneers in the bedroom. The sturdy dining table is another statement piece that draws attention.





The white floors of the interior and the wooden floor lining the balcony area make the space seem open and airy, while also drawing attention to the various rooms' architecture and furnishings.

The overall feel is of calm and serenity – perfect for unwinding after a long, hard day at work...

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stark scandinavian





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY 5 Rooms Resale Executive Apartment @ Tampines

TOTAL SPACE 1500 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 weeks

STYLE Scandinavian

OWNER Young Couple, Family of 2

Scandinavian design is known the world over for its simplicity and functionality - and this airy renovation in Tampines is a perfect example of the style. There is particular focus on space and light, and the open plan that has been utilised, allows for maximum sunshine to filter in – perfect for a young family whose focal point is the living area.

Music and dance are the soul of the family, with a custom-built music studio creating the centrepiece of their home. Industrial touches like the lighting fixtures and black trim are complimented with classic white walls – the epitome of minimalist Scandinavian interior design.





A light palette is used throughout the home, with built-in cupboards, doors, floors and kitchen fittings clothed in subtle woody veneers.

The philosophy of keeping things simple, pure and beautiful can be seen throughout - not too "perfect" or showroom-like, but rather liveable, practical, and welcoming.

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122

modern minimalist





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY 22 Pasir Ris Link Sea Estate

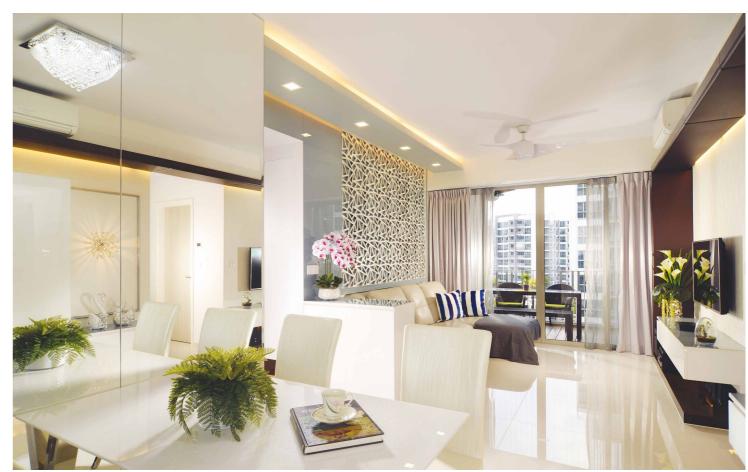
TOTAL SPACE 1500 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 weeks

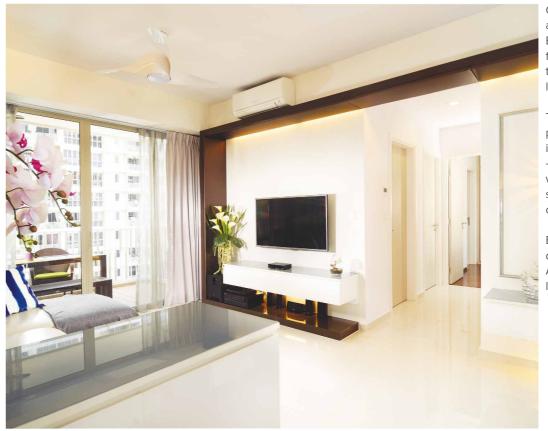
STYLE Comtemporay

OWNER Middleage Couple, Family of 3

A key component of modern design is its minimalism – using the least to achieve the most. As can be seen in this beautiful renovation, the result is a clutter-free space where attention is placed in the details.

In a modern space, white walls are one of the main elements – creating a crisp, clean, and fresh environment. White walls enhance the details of the room itself and expand the space, without drawing attention to themselves.





Complementing the white walls are a selection of clean-lined furniture. Beautiful yet simple shapes, and a focus on comfort all blend together to create a stylish and welcoming living space for this family of three.

The modern style also incorporates plenty of natural materials. These include wood, stone, and leather - all materials that quietly provide warmth and texture to the entire space without detracting from the overall feel.

Bare floors round off this modern design's less-is-more mantra. Artistic accessories like dramatic lighting features complete the look.











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BALCONY BEAUTIFUL: 5 TIPS TO DECORATING YOUR BALCONY

TRANSFORM YOUR CONDO OR HDB FLAT'S BALCONY INTO A STUNNING AND INVITING SPACE WITH THESE TIPS.

By Samantha Ecahvez





To create this outdoor room, here are some things to consider:

- 1. Measure your balcony. "You may have a sense of how much furniture you can accommodate here, but taking measurements with you to the store will help in choosing specific pieces," says Vegas.
- **2. Get weatherproof furniture.** Make sure pieces of your outdoor furniture can hold up to the elements, are perfect for outdoor use, and have durable fabrics and rustproof metals. Get double-duty pieces as well, like an ottoman that can work as a side table. If your balcony is significantly small, you can use foldaway and stackable pieces.





- **3. Add flowers, plants, and herbs.** Use potted plants to add colour to your space and conceal architectural features. You can also go up and do vertical gardening.
- **4. Soften the space with textiles.** Use fabrics to bring softness to your outdoor area. Look for an outdoor rug that is water-resistant, and place cushions on your chairs. "Those cushy pieces will also make outdoor furniture a whole lot more comfortable," advises Vegas.
- **5.** Use accessories to pull everything together. "Decorative accents are important, even when the view is the primary attraction. Plants, vases of flowers, table linens, pillows, and cushions will give the space the unified look of a real room," concludes Vegas.

Original story from Cromly.com





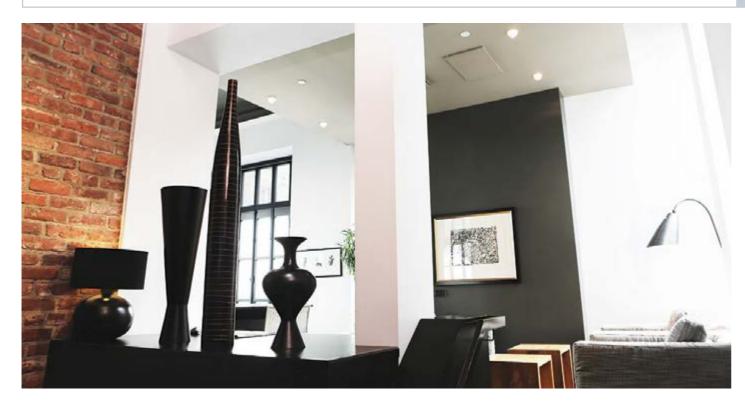
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DRESSING UP YOUR DREAM HOME

LAYERING ON THE ELEMENTS AND MATERIALS IN A SPACE MAKES FOR A MORE COMPLETE-LOOKING INTERIOR.

By Camille Besinga



Interior design has several elements, but it's the right balance of each of these elements that makes for a great-looking interior. For example, a living room that has a good colour palette yet only utilises glossy, shiny textures may look a little too cold and clinical A bedroom that features plenty of wood, earthy hues, and rough surfaces may feel a bit abrasive.

Great layering is what makes the interior more or less complete. There should be a healthy amount of tension—not too little or it won't be obvious, not too much, or it will feel overwhelming. Contrast and complement materials and colours, textures and scale. We're not just talking about accessories and décor; this covers the whole gamut of interior design—from wall, floor, and ceiling treatments, to window coverings, doors, trim, down to the removable parts like furniture, décor, and personal belongings.

- Let's start with the first layer: an empty room, with blank walls and floors. You can cover walls up with paint or paper, or a more textured treatment like grasscloth. Wood, tiles, and laminate are some examples of first-layer floor coverings.
- For the next layer, you fill up the room with built-in parts, like

window and door trim, or even built-in furnishings. You may also put in other materials that may help soften the rigid corners of your space, like rugs or window treatments.

- Then, you may bring in removable parts of the room, like furniture. Once those are in, you may also begin placing décor and other accessories, which helps establish the look and style of your
- It's also good if you layer in different materials that contrast and complement each other.
- Even a minimalist-monochromatic space can achieve a complete interior look by varying the textures and adding lighting elements to keep things visually interesting.
- Even when a room is sparsely furnished, accent elements like a chandelier or black-framed windows with a breathtaking city view, can still give any space a glam appearance.
- Your own belongings and collections are actually what makes your space intimately special, and what will make your guests say "Your place is so you!"

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4 QUICK AND EASY WAYS TO DECORATE A COFFEE TABLE

ADD EXTRA FLAIR TO YOUR LIVING ROOM AND DO IT LIKE A PRO!

By Jerni Camposano





"Coffee tables accessorize a sofa," declare Coral Nafie and Barbara Cameron in About.com's Guide to Home Decorating: A Room-by-Room Guide to Creating the House of Your Dreams. "Some people think a sofa just looks forlorn without a coffee table in front. If the original purpose of a coffee table was to hold a coffee service, today's coffee table is just as likely to be used casually to hold the TV remote, magazines, and accessories."

The coffee table is not meant to just sit there in your living room. Mesmerise with one that's styled like a pro! Here are quick and easy ways to do that:

- 1. Pile of books. No need to go on a trip to the home decor shop. Bring out some of your coffee table books, pile 'em up and voila! They look stylish in there and serve a function, too—guests can browse through them while waiting or just lounging.
- **2. Fresh flowers.** Flowers—especially in vibrant hues—can

instantly cheer up any space. A fuss-free way to prettify your living room: park a vase with fresh blooms on the coffee table and enjoy the many benefits of having flowers in your home.

- **3. Candles.** Create a cosy and relaxing ambience in this common room by styling up the coffee table with candles in different shapes and sizes. They add drama and create a specific mood in the living room. If you are going for some aromatherapy, display scented candles. Here is a guide on which scents are perfect for the living room.
- **4. Tray.** There are no hard rules as to which ones you can display and not display on your coffee table. Master the trifecta of book, flower, and candle arrangement and place them all in one elegant tray. It looks neat, organised, and stylish!

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5 QUICK AND EASY WAYS TO UPDATE YOUR DINING ROOM

HEED THESE NO-RENO MAKEOVER TIPS

By Jerni Camposano



Because the dining room is where people come together to enjoy festive meals, it should be an open, inviting space. Whether you're decorating for a large area or one that has limited square footage, heed these tips to update the look of this integral part of the home.

1. Throw in a rug.

Adding rugs creates a world of difference to any space. It's an inexpensive way of adding style and character to your dining area. A carefully selected one can also tie up the look of the entire room.

2. Inject lively and cheerful pops of colours.

Make your dining space come to life by adding bright and bold elements. The dose of energy could come in the form of multi-hued dishes, yellow cabinet, neon pink chair, or emerald chandeliers. Just make sure you don't go overboard.

3. Go backles

If you've got a small dining space and would want to maximise the



number of people who can sit in, opt for a dining bench. There are many other benefits to replacing dining chairs with a bench.

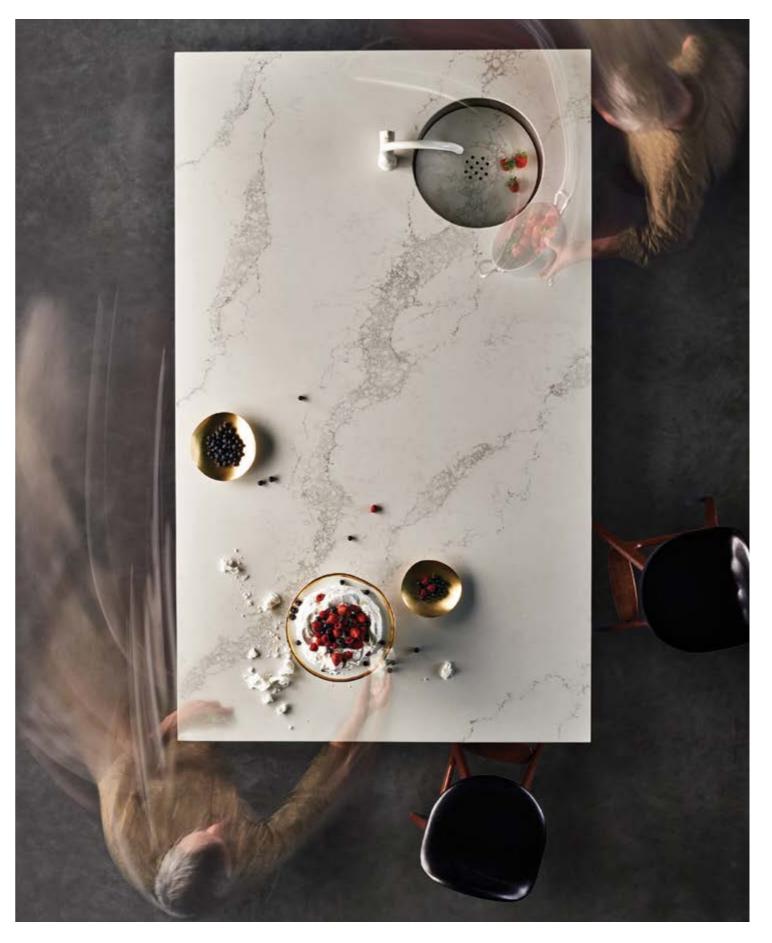
4. Bring the outdoors in.

Outdoor elements such as wood and plants could add life to your dining space. Plus we all know the many good things plants bring into our home (here's one: improve air quality). These natural elements also make for wonderful tablescapes.

5 Use dividere

Most homes' layout feature the kitchen and dining room almost as one area. If you want a dedicated room for eating and gathering, you can create such space even without building walls. You can use cubby shelves, hanging plants, wooden beams, or sliding doors as dividers to separate these two areas.

Original story from Cromly.com



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spaciousness scandinavian style





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY 4 Room Resale Flat at Serangoon Avenue 3

TOTAL SPACE 1008 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 Weeks

> STYLE Modern Scandinavian **OWNER** Single Working Adult

From its minimalist vibes to its clean lines and uber-modern look, everything about this Scandinavian design is simply stylish.

Clean lines and organic shapes are the epitome of Scandinavian furniture and nothing shows off those lines quite like the accent brick wall in the living room, and an adjacent wall decorated with the owner's colourful collection of memorabilia.

The living room has a feeling of spaciousness with simple yet stylish furniture – a theme that continues on into the bedroom.





Predominantly white interiors are characteristic of Scandinavian decor, and the white walls seen throughout help to bounce the light around and make the home look brighter. A glossy tiled floor in the living room and blond wooden floors in the bedroom, closet and bathroom, add visual interest and lend further lightness to areas that might otherwise be in shadow.

Instead of settling completely for the traditional monochrome look, this renovation has a fresh take on classic Scandinavian decor with bright and colourful accents that add some tasteful finishing touches.





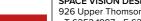












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contemporary victorian





TYPE OF PROPERTY 3-bedroom Condominium

TOTAL SPACE 1200 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 2 months

> STYLE Modern Victorian **OWNER** Young Couple, Family of 2

An opulent, fairy-tale look is the very definition of Modern Victorian design, and in this three-bedroom condominium the owners have allowed this style to take over their entire living space!

With only husband and wife occupying this home, two of the three rooms have been converted to his- and her- studies. But the Victorian style continues throughout the space – from bedroom, to dining room, and living room.





Dramatic and lavish, the style is quite complex when it comes to carpets, walls, flooring, and wallpapers. But in keeping with the Modern aspect of the design, the home is also adorned with contemporary furniture and ornamental accents.

Chandeliers, decorative wallpapers and quilted upholstery compliment the look to create a blend; at once both Victorian and Modern.

The owner's colour choice of Champagne to decorate the feature walls, is balanced by pure whites elsewhere – to create both warmth and a feeling of spaciousness.

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rustic industrial dream





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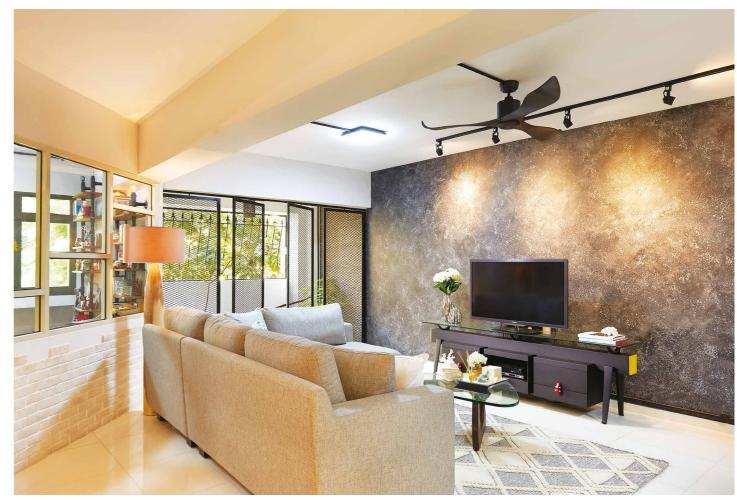
TYPE OF PROPERTY Executive Maisonette, Resale Flat at Woodlands

TOTAL SPACE 1528 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 weeks

DESIGN STYLE Mix of Modern Rustic & Industrial

OWNER Young Couple

This executive maisonette at Woodlands evokes cosiness and warmth, thanks to the wooden furniture pieces, cove lightings, and modern industrial fixtures like track lights that populate the area. Natural elements and contrasting textures—like the brick white walls, grey stone TV wall mixed, and glossy surfaces beautifully combine to create a put-together rustic look.





U-Home executed the space planning efficiently and effectively, turning this resale flat into a spacious, airy, and inviting place. Devoid of clutter and designed with the homeowners' needs in mind, it feels as warm as a country home.

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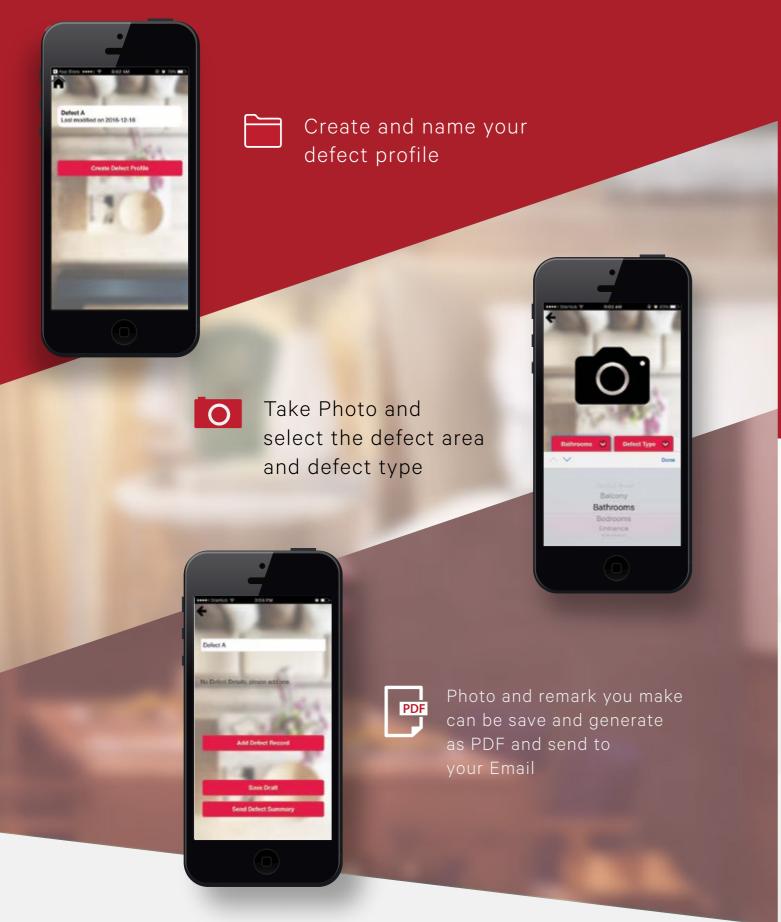






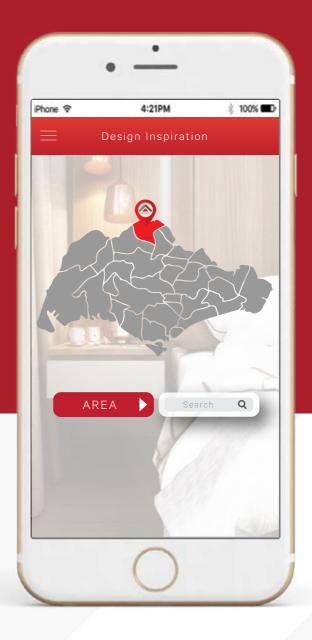
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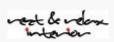


















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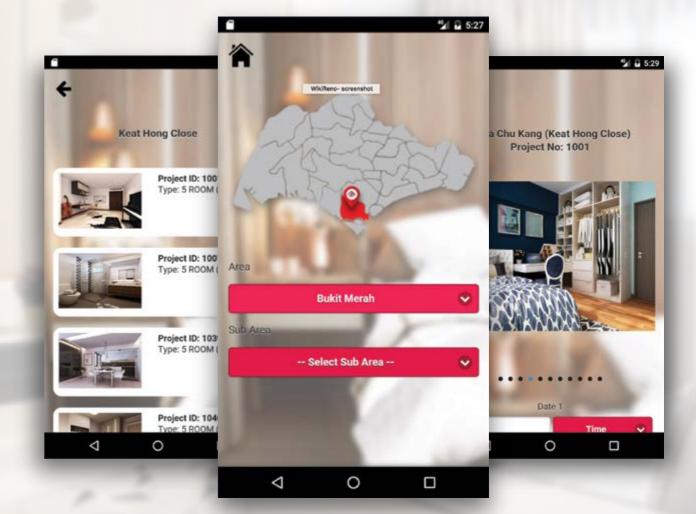


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CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY Studio Apartment at The Skywoods

TOTAL SPACE 527 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 5 weeks **DESIGN STYLE** Scandinavian OWNER Couple

Barnyard doors, white brick walls, track lights, and wooden and metallic fixtures figure in this Scandinavian industrial studio apartment. There is harmony as these Scandustrial elements mix together, and the result? A warm and cosy atmosphere permeating throughout the home.

The flat also features built-in shelves with a twist—the uneven cabinet doors by the entryway give the place a playful vibe.





Different wood grains alongside contemporary (read: glossy) textures amp up the look. While the place is inherently spacechallenged, the designers from Unimax Creative were able to maximize each corner. No space wasted, indeed.















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fun urban style





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY Condominuim TOTAL SPACE 1200 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 3 weeks

STYLE Urban Resort

OWNER Management Level

BOLD and FUN are the keywords that sum up this home and its urban-style renovation!

In the living and dining areas, neutral coloured walls and flooring, in whites and beiges - provide a backdrop and canvas for brightly coloured statement pieces and focal points, in the form of furnishings, decor and paintings.

These bold splashes of patterns and colour really stand out in every room - and the theme is even taken to a further level in the study with a statement wall decorated in 'zebra-stripe' wallpaper.





The treatment is not over-the-top however – being eye-catching but still not overwhelming the overall design.

This condominium is consequently imbued with a sense of fun and energy – even the selection of furniture and decoration adds character and charm to the various living spaces. Functionality and clean lines throughout are typical of this urban style.









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retro mood inspiration





CASE FILE_

TYPE OF PROPERTY HDB 5-Room (Point Block)

TOTAL SPACE 1259 sq ft TIME TO COMPLETE 8 weeks STYLE Semi Retro **OWNER** Elderly Couple An overriding palette of pure whites makes up the commanding feature of this apartment. Throughout every room, white walls and floors create an impression of immense spaciousness while affording a level of maximum brightness throughout.

The white is punctuated by both wallpapered and woodveneered walls in the living room, creating a number of interesting contrasts in texture and patterns. Another significant feature is the large, plush sofa that serves as the focal point of the room.

The linear kitchen space is minimalist yet functional – white again dominating but complimented by clean, chrome surfaces. Space is further maximised by the use of flush-fitting white cupboards and shelves.





In every room, retro-style lighting fixtures add a touch of nostalgia to the overall design, so that we are left with an overall impression of modern simplicity with a slight nod to times gone by.

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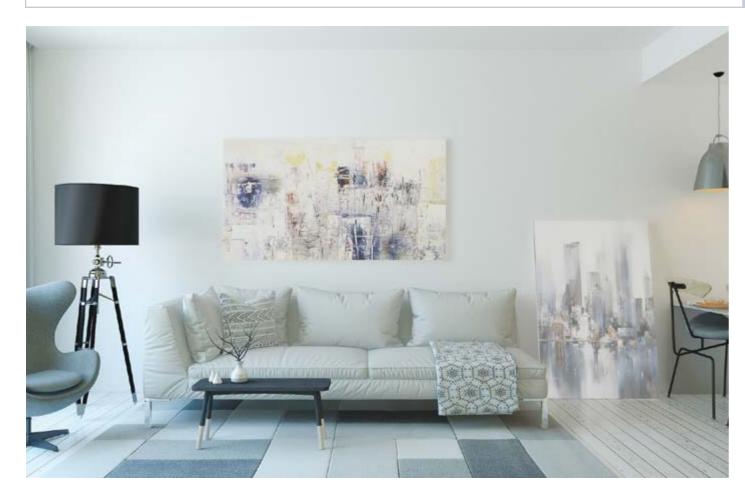
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5 STYLISH WAYS TO WORK WITH A NEUTRAL SOFA

YOU CAN STILL LIVEN UP YOUR LIVING ROOM EVEN WITH A NEUTRAL SOFA IN IT.

By Jerni Camposano



So you bought a white, beige, or grey sofa? These hues are safe and smart choices as they make it easier for homeowners to style up the living room to make it more interesting and visually appealing.

Don't settle for plain when you can have a Pinterest-worthy living area. Here are some ways to work with neutral sofa:

- 1. Experiment with patterns and colours for your cushions. The easiest way to add impact to a neutral sofa? Throw in some cushions of varied shapes, sizes, colours, and patterns. At times, even just one statement-making piece can do the trick.
- **2. Install an eye-catching wallpaper.** A wallpaper that wows serves as your living room's focal point. It can undoubtedly add visual interest to the space. And because you have a neutral sofa

to complement it, you can choose whatever wallpaper design you want.

- **3.** Bring in some green elements. Plants and flowers are a tried-and-tested way of adding life to a space. Using plants as a home decor provides a number of benefits, including purifying the indoor air; beautiful blooms can uplift your mood.
- **4. Inject colours through accent pieces.** A neutral sofa is a good starting point to introduce colours to your living room. Pick colourful accent chairs, a coffee table, or rugs that can cheer up the space.
- **5. Create a photo gallery.** Use the wall behind or near the sofa to create a gallery wall of your family photos. It's a heartwarming touch to an otherwise blank space.

Original story from Cromly.com



6 EASY WAYS TO ADD LIFE TO YOUR KITCHEN

ENLIVEN THE HEART OF THE HOME WITH THESE HANDY TIPS AND TRICKS

By Jerni Camposano



You get into your kitchen day in, day out. That's why it's important that this space brings you inspiration, especially when you're prepping dishes for your loved ones.

"There's always room for improvement, especially when it comes to an outdated kitchen. Are you ready to take the plunge?" ask the editors of Kitchens: The Smart Approach to Design.

Transform your kitchen into a happy place for you and your family with these tips and tricks:

- 1. Show off your precious collection. Your beautiful dining wares and vintage kitchen items should have a place in your kitchen. Let them serve as works of art displayed on open shelving (recommended) or a dedicated glass cabinet (safer option).
- **2.** Choose coloured appliances. Chris Peterson in Kitchen Ideas You Can Use: Inspiring Designs & Clever Solutions for Remodeling Your Kitchen, encourages homeowners to go beyond stainless steel for appliances. "Several manufacturers have joined the color parade with limited palettes of elegant colors to front their ranges, fridges, ovens, and other appliances. Find the right one, and it can be the focal center point of your kitchen."

- 3. Play with lighting. Aside from colour, lighting plays a key role in creating a focal point. Be more creative with your lighting fixture to inject a sense of fun in this space in your home. Pull it off with your task light, pendant, or ambient light.
- 4. Amp your kitchen style with beautiful backsplash. The backsplash serves a practical purpose of protecting the wall from stains, but it can also be a decorative piece. Do not let the kitchen's overall look fall flat with bland backsplash design. One set in bold colour and pattern will definitely steal the show.
- 5. Introduce fun and quirky accents. Not only do they personalise your space, they also make your stay in the kitchen light and enjoyable. Consider wall stickers, out-of-the-box accessories, or DIY chalkboard.
- **6. Get started with container gardening.** What better way to inject life into any space than bringing the outdoors in? Some plants can live with little sunshine and care so you can grow your own garden one container at a time even in this part of your home. Here's a suggestion: plant your own herbs and reap the (culinary) benefits soon after.

Original story from Cromly.com



10 WAYS TO DECORATE BLANK WALLS

STYLISH WAYS TO TRANSFORM BARE WALLS FROM BLAH TO BEAUTIFUL

By Jerni Camposano



Homeowners tend to get too focused on planning the room layout, choosing the furniture, and picking decors that they sometimes forget about the wall.

"More than anything else, wall and window coverings can set the tone for your decor," says Heather J. Paper, author of Decorating Ideas That Work: Creative Design Solutions for Your Home. "They can provide a quiet canvas, allowing the furniture to take center stage, or be a springboard for the overall color scheme."

Turn your wall into a design wonder with these quick and easy

- 1. Hang headturning works of art. An art museum of a home? Possible. Don't settle for just a horizontal arrangement of frames. You can go vertical, square grid, salon-style, and more.
- 2. Paint to create a feature wall. Paper adds, "Paint is the great chameleon of wall coverings. You can make a bold statement with a solid hue or create a highly decorative finish, from simple sponging and combing to more elaborate graphic applications." Stun with a wall that offers visual effects. Try the Dulux Ambiance ColourMotion, which displays subtle unique shades when viewed from different angles and under different illuminations.
- **3. Wow with washi tape.** An all-around decorating tool, the washi tape can help you change the look of your wall. It can be a cheaper alternative to paint, and brings endless possibilities on decorating bare walls.
- **4. Set the mood with a faux fireplace.** The couple living in this country-style HDB flat in Punggol completed the cottage look by



decking one wall with a faux fireplace mantel and pretty decors. Placed by the entryway, it makes for a nice welcome to your guests.

- **5. Install a statement-making wallpaper.** Wallpapers make a lasting impression and keep the travel theme "wandering" throughout the house.
- **6. Make it personal with family photos.** Immortalise wonderful moments with the family through framed photos. Needless to say, they add warmth and nostalgia to any space. Want ideas on how to creatively display photos?
- 7. **Style it up with a sconce.** "If you're looking for all-out drama, you might opt to wash a wall with light, perhaps to emphasize a decorative paint finish or a striking color," suggests Paper. "Some accent lighting...can serve double duty. Wall sconces, for example, can generally illuminate a hallway and add a decorative aspect, too."
- **8. Display your knickknacks on a picture ledge.** A ledge is one of the easiest way to get your collection up on the wall. Simply install one (or more) and you can begin showing off your precious stuff.
- **9. Hang an ornate mirror.** Small space? Visually double an area's dimension by hanging a mirror on the wall. It also instantly brightens up a room.
- **10. Combine any of the items above.** It doesn't hurt to combine two or more decorative elements on the wall, so long as you keep it stylish and functional.

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HOW TO UTILISE NATURAL LIGHT IN YOUR HOME

SUNLIGHT DOES A LOT IN UPLIFTING ONE'S MOOD, IMPROVING YOUR ROOM'S COLOUR QUALITY, AND EVEN LOWERING YOUR UTILITY BILLS. HERE'S HOW YOU CAN MAXIMISE NATURAL LIGHT IN YOUR HOME.

By Camille Besinga



When you are thinking of changing up a room's layout, repainting the walls, changing your furnishings or even adding artwork into a space, think first of what direction the room is facing to know how much natural light filters into the space.

Why so? According to Clare Steel, author of Step-by-Step Home Design and Decorating, "The direction a room faces has an important effect on the amount and type of light it gets and the mood it creates." Use the guide below to know how to get the effect and mood you want for the rooms in your home.

East-facing rooms: These get a lot of light in the morning, but come afternoon time, it can get cool. But when there is light, it can be strong and can cause glare.

West-facing rooms: "This is tonally cooler in the morning than in the afternoon," says Steele. As sunset colours can get intensely orange-y towards dusk, you need to pick colours that won't clash with the light.

North-facing rooms: These generally don't admit as much light, but if so, are often soft and indirect. As such, north-facing rooms are usually cooler than others.

South-facing rooms: These normally have adequate, warm light throughout the day.

When choosing to open up your space with big, floor-to-ceiling windows, choose a direction that won't cause glare or too much heat. A north-facing room might be a good place for this design.



Glare is often unwelcome in a room because it makes occupants uncomfortable due to the blocking of one's line of vision with a harsh, brilliant light. While soffits or roof eaves can help reduce glare when the sun is high, it won't help the path of sunlight come sunrise (if in an easterly room) or sunset (in a western-facing room).

More often than not, adequate natural light won't require you to open artificial lights during the daytime, thereby reducing your overall utility costs. If you are also able to control heat gain/loss, you won't need to open electric fans or airconditioning as often.

Balance out glare and/or shadows cast by windows facing one direction by placing another window in a different direction.

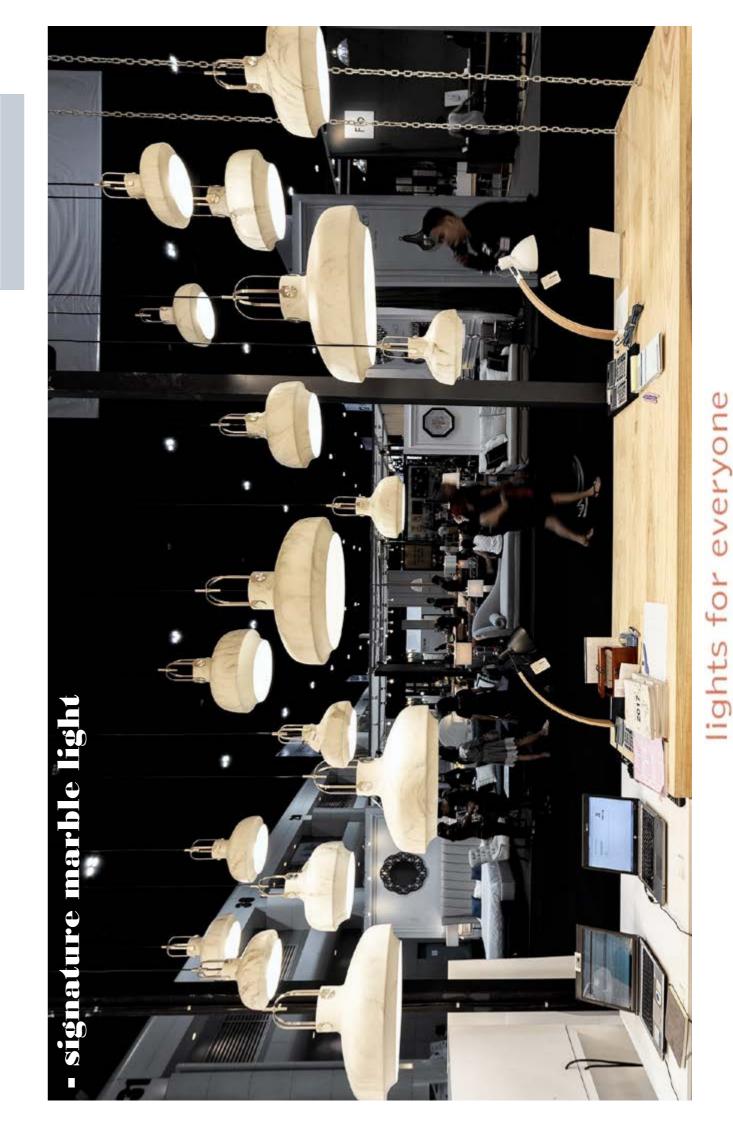
A mirror opposite a window reflects and bounces back sunlight coming in, which helps brighten up a light-starved space.

Choose paint colours that reflect light rather than absorb it, to mimic the same effect as a mirror.

Temper harsh sunlight with curtains or shades. Choose ones that are sheer enough to let light in, but opaque enough to add some semblance of privacy.

Apart from windows, other ways of letting light in include installing dormer windows, clerestories (bands of windows along an upper wall), or a skylight, which also help exhaust hot air out of a house.

Original story from Cromly.com



6 SMART DECORATING TIPS FOR A SMALL LIVING ROOM

YOUR CRAMPED LIVING ZONE CAN STILL BE A CHIC AND COMFORTABLE SPACE.

By Jerni Camposano



Your living room is probably the one area in your home that will leave that lasting impression on your guests. So make sure that even with limitations in space, it will be something comfortable and memorable.

Heed these tips to create a small but stylish living room:

- **1. Avoid crowding the entryway.** You'd like guests to have a clear view of the expanse of your space. Huge furniture blocking their way create an impression that there's less room to move around the house. Keep this area clutter-free with just minimal decors.
- 2. Resist the temptation of pushing all the furniture up against the walls. Keeping furniture pieces like the sofa, TV console, cabinets, and shelves away from the walls can actually give the illusion of greater depth. This, in turn, make the room appear more spacious.
- **3. Consider your choice of coffee table.** What about opting for tiny square tables that you can easily move from one room to another

instead of a chunky rectangular table? Or you can also choose one with foldable legs so you can quickly tuck them away when not in use. These alternatives are stylish space-savers.

- **4. Manager clutter.** Because it's usually one of the bigger rooms in the house, the living room can sometimes become the catch basin for a lot of stuff. But it doesn't have to be cluttered. Choose pieces you can display on the shelves, try vertical storage for some, and use the others as decors.
- **5. Opt for double-duty furniture pieces.** When you have limited square footage, it's best to choose items that can take on not just one, but two roles in your home. Take these as examples: a bookshelf that acts as a room divider, a sofa that can be turned into a bed, an ottoman that can serve as a coffee table.
- **6. Go for pendant or wall lighting.** Because every square metre is essential, save precious floor space when you hang your lights instead of parking a floor lamp beside your sofa.

Original story from Cromly.com







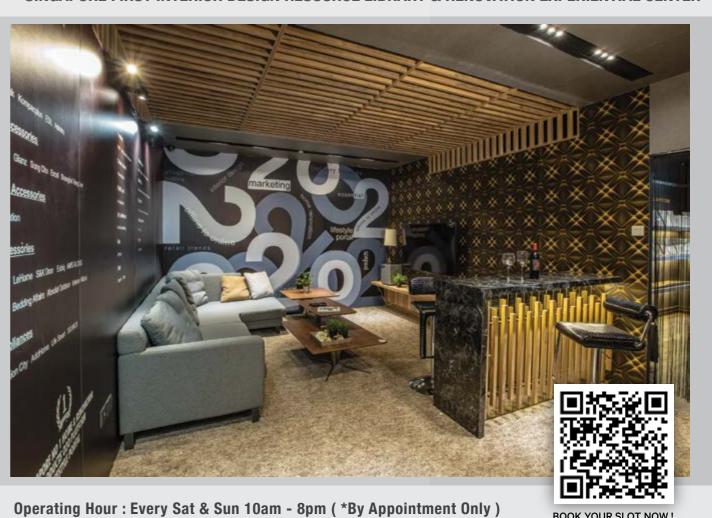








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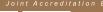
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