

RE-MODELING, RE-DECORATING YOUR HOME FOR MUCH LESS THAN YOU'D IMAGINE

These days, the mere word "remodel" sounds expensive, and getting new furniture may seem out of the question.

But on ***The Early Show*** on Monday, March 30, 2009, Stephen Saint-Onge, a contributing editor at Better Homes and Gardens (www.bhg.com), shared some great tips on do-it-yourself renovations that could save you a bundle.

The segment featured three women from across the country who saved thousands of dollars remodeling or redecorating their homes by doing a little research and rolling up their sleeves and doing some of the work themselves.

Stephen walked viewers through some of the best ways to save big when your fixing up your house:

1. Update faucets & hardware
2. Work around existing fixtures
3. Buy direct from manufacturer
4. Find your store's discounts
5. Give old furniture new paint

Iowa Bathroom

Unwilling to endure the expense and effort of a major bath remodel, Jacqui Norman decided to have fun with a creative cosmetic makeover. Jacqui updated the sink and faucet and retiled the countertop. Then she brushed the vanity with a fresh coat of paint to match her 1950s green tub. Greenglass tile squares accent a new slate floor that she and her husband, Andy, created by cutting up a salvaged schoolhouse chalkboard. Bold poppy towels and new pendant lights tie into the new bath's bright retro style. "You can work with existing features when you give it a little thought," says Jacqui. (MORE BELOW)

West Nyack, N.Y. Living Room

Wendy Portnoy took a week and traveled down to High Point North Carolina where she was able to save about half by buying furniture directly from the manufacturer. Wendy spent about \$23,000, and estimates that she would have spent about twice that in New York for the same furniture. High Point North Carolina is called the furniture capital of the world. Twice a year about 85 thousand people flock to North Carolina for the High Point Market. The High Point Market is the largest industry trade show in the world. (MORE BELOW)

Brooklyn Brownstone

Instead of redoing floors: Ann covered an ugly floor tile basement floor with ikea sisal carpet squares. great for renters because you can make them look like wall to wall sisal and then pull them up cleanly (no adhesive) when you move.

I painted junk furniture, I'm doing this trick of painting junk store tables, getting a glass top made for them and buying a beautiful piece of paper from Kate's. cut the paper and put under glass. looks great. i'm doing that one now.

Instead of custom shades: I looked at a bunch of discount stores (target, BB&B, frontgate, etc) to find roman shades that would fit our extra long windows. in the living room, i bought 1 extra shade and cut it into ready-finished panels to make a valence at the top of each window. i stapled the one unfinished side of the panel to a square dowel & mounted that at the top of each window. then i just hung the other whole shades lower (just below the bottom edge of the valence) so that the shades reach the sill and look custom. because custom shades are a fortune.

We bought our mantel and our chandelier at a salvage place and stripped & painted them. You can take old plastic cheap chandeliers and spray paint them white or black.

The mantel: we took a plain wall, bought a salvage mantel (you can cut mitered corners into crown molding and make the big square out of a bunch of molding- this can look very modern or very deco. definitely cool). Painted a charcoal gray on the wall inside of the mantel for our "fireplace". paint a slightly darker square in the center bottom to give the illusion of depth. then you buy a simple straight up and down iron fireplace screen (not the folding kind & not brass if you want to be chic) and it looks like you have a fireplace that's been there forever. a great trick for homes with no architectural details. or like mine, where the details were stripped away. or even a rental.

We took a cheap ikea book shelf and make it look like an expensive built-in by buying molding and trimming it out. you could really shoot that at my place in my dining room on our ugly built-ins. and of course you can paint the inside of the bookshelves a contrasting color, but that's very 2006.

New old chairs ... we covered salvaged dining chairs with fabric remnant and a staple gun (MORE BELOW)

MORE on IOWA:

1) Home renovations can be really expensive, Jacqui was able to save thousands by doing it herself, what are some tips we can learn from Jacqui?

- This is a good example of how sometimes you can work with you have - and make it better (vs gutting and starting over) She kept the same sink base - but painted it and added new hardware.
- You do not have to do major construction to get big results. Sometimes simple changes can make an impact - painting, new lighting - in this case - mirrors.

2) Can changing out a faucet and hardware on your cabinets really make that big of a difference?

- In bathrooms and kitchens these simple steps can really take something from tired or dated to stylish and trendy. It can be as simple as installing new knobs or drawer pulls [PROP- knobs, drawer pulls]
- You don't have even have to purchase items that are very expensive...but the newness will make it fresh and re-energize the space.

3) And it's also a great money saver to work around existing fixtures like bathtubs and counters right?

- Yes, in this case she worked with the existing color of the tub and built the room from there. In other cases, you can inexpensively have your tub resurfaced to clean up or freshen one that may be colored or marked. This way you are not replacing the whole unit.
- When you live in a space everyday it is hard to see what might be right there under your nose. See your space in a new way.

MORE ON WEST NYACK

WEST NYACK

4) How much money can you save by buying directly from the manufacturer?

- People don't always have time to shop around...they want to get it done. You can buy everything at the same time and usually get a good price. Save even MORE money by going direct to manufacturer.

- You can shop at retailers and sometimes buy samples at a discounted price. In the case of this family - they want right to the source where furniture comes from in the furniture world...

5) But this is really only worth it if you're buying a lot of furniture, right?

- Yes, for an entire house - or multiple rooms - this will save you time and money.

- There are also membership places (think of them as Costco or Sam's Club for furniture like Direct Buy where you can shop for everything in your home from appliances to furniture and cabinets at a discounted price.

6) If you only need 1 or 2 items like a dresser or end tables, what do you recommend?

- Be creative - think about buying floor samples and you can refresh the pieces with new paint or clean up - to even buying unfinished furniture and finishing it the way you want.

- Look online for nearby discount outlets

- People sometimes forget to "shop at home" - sometimes you already have pieces around that you don't use that can get new life with a coat of paint or a different location in your home.

MORE ON BROOKLYN

7) Where can you buy salvage furniture?

- There are salvage places all over the country!

- www.greatsalvage.com is one of my favorites - these guys take good things from old houses that are being torn down and resell

- Look for local salvage yards and warehouses - repurpose vintage doors, mantles, cabinets, clawfoot tubs, lighting, etc. All items that can bring in a sense of character and history to a new home or remodeled space.

- www.oldhouseweb.com is a great resource to find salvage sources all around the country

- Also- Craigslist and Ebay

8) What do you mean by repurposing furniture?

- Finding new use for an old item

- Old furniture can also be repurposed with fresh paint, a new stain, detailing or trim to get a new look.

- Figure out new ways to use existing items within your home - from lamps from one room going into the living room, art work from one area being moved to the foyer extra chair in the family room gets moved to the master bedroom for a reading area

9) Even if it's nothing major what are some inexpensive cosmetic things you recommend doing?

- Paint is major...cheap and easy. Use on walls or furniture...easy. Tip: You can sometimes get great deals at your local paint or hardware store by purchasing pre-mixed paint that was returned. [PROP: pre-mixed paint]
- Or temporary (and affordable) floor tiles [PROP- stick on floor tiles]
- Add detail - at a discount [Prop: pre-cut/scrap moldings]
- Rearrange your rooms....that is a big FREE THING that anyone can do...see the spaces you have in a new way....then add trim molding to boring windows or create a mantle area.