

A spring refresh that won't cost a dime

Jane Lockhart's tips to revamp your decor and work space without leaving your home

Feeling like you're hibernating? You're not alone. Usually it means a long winter's nap, but with social distancing it's become a spring necessity.

For me, being at home for extended periods of time motivates me to make changes in my surroundings.

When I feel the need for a home refresh, I start by decluttering. All the drawers, shelves, cupboards, nooks and crannies must be tackled and purged.

After all, we should feel happy, inspired and safe at home. If everywhere you look you see clutter, chances are you're feeling anything but happy. Employ whatever method works to rid yourself of unnecessary stuff.

Now, look around you. Find the light. Open the drapes and raise the blinds: that's where you need to be. For a fresh approach to give your home a lift, orient your furniture to embrace daylight and make it the focal point for seating arrangements.



When working from home, make sure your work space has good lighting

While you're at it, get rid of the heavy throws and dark pillows. See if this minimalist approach makes you feel at ease. Maybe they don't need replacing just yet.

With spring trying to push through, this is the best time to change out accessories and inject colour into every room. Even

though shopping is not an option, you can bring out your inner stylist by going through rooms and repurposing pieces. Swap out books or vases from the bedroom and re-dress the coffee table in the living room. Take out that painting you have stashed away in the closet and walk it

through the house. Where is the best place to hang it? Just moving art or accessories to different rooms can add the right touch to help you enjoy a room again. Group objects together in odd numbers: it can look very satisfying.

If you usually work from home, this is the time to clean up your home office. Add better lighting, reassess the layout. Take the time to set it up so it really functions for you. It's easy to get stuck in a rut and forget we can actually enjoy our work space, even at home. If your desk has been relegated to a windowless basement, it's time to see the light. Even if it means moving to the master bedroom, set yourself up near a good source of daylight. Eight hours is a long time to spend under artificial light in front of a computer screen. You deserve a window.

If you've suddenly found yourself working from home, try not to set up on the dining room table. Find a quiet (if that's

possible) place to work. You need the space to separate work from home. That starts with a door that closes and ends with you being able to function, happily.

It may take a while for children to understand the difference between a parent at work or just at home, but if it helps, set up a work space for the kids too. It can be in its own room or close to where you work if you want to be able to keep an eye on them.

It doesn't have to cost anything to refresh your home. All it takes is a little muscle, creativity and a few full garbage bags.

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