

# 100 Calorie Decorating

## 10 Tips for Decorating on a Healthy Budget

1. **Paint, Paint, Paint:** The fastest and cheapest way to dramatically change the look of your room is by adding a new coat of paint to the walls. Go bold or subtle. Choose colors that complement the furniture and accessories already present in the room. Add texture and richness by using a faux finish. But remember, paint is not limited to just the walls, almost anything is fair game when it comes to paint: furniture, cabinets, knobs, picture frames...even floors. The possibilities are endless! Just be sure to research the best way to prep your project. If you find you are having a hard time choosing a color for your walls and trim, check out some helpful online tools by Sherwin Williams ([www.sherwinwilliams.com/visualizer](http://www.sherwinwilliams.com/visualizer)) and Better Homes and Gardens (<http://www.bhg.com/decorating/color/colors/welcome-to-color-a-room>).
2. **Reuse, Repurpose, Rearrange:** Many times the very thing you are looking for is right in your own home and it's free!! Take an inventory of the items you have in your home already. Move things around to a different location in your home. Bring some pillows from your bedroom into the family room or use a plate or bowl from your kitchen to accessorize in your living room or bedroom. Books make great accents on mantels, coffee tables, and side tables. Repurpose what you have. A quilt can become a tablecloth or a tablecloth can be used as a window treatment. Place-mats can be used on end tables to give a little color and texture. Lastly, try the art of rearranging. Simply rearranging the layout of a room can create a whole new look and you can always move it back at no cost!! If you need some inspiration for a new layout, visit the Better Homes and Gardens website for another useful tool (<http://www.bhg.com/decorating/arrange-a-room>).
3. **Dress up those walls:** Get creative when it comes to decorating your walls. Create your own artwork. Frame pages of an old calendar, notecards, or even books. Make it personal by displaying your favorite verse or quote. Vinyl lettering works well on flat walls and can be pleasing reminders to your family. Frame your child's artwork, hand or foot prints, games and puzzles. Bring nature indoors by framing pressed leaves or flowers. If you have a lot of wall space to fill, put together large groupings of frames in different colors and styles to add variety. Intermingle those with other items like plates or iron work. Use a faux finish or stencil to add texture and depth. A helpful tip when hanging frames is to trace your frames onto craft paper, cut out each one and tape them onto the wall to establish the best layout before you hammer any nails! In most instances, hang framed work about 5 ½ to 6 feet from the ground. That way they are just slightly above eye level, but at a perfect height for admiring.
4. **Treat your windows well:** A great way to make a statement is with window treatments. They take up a lot of vertical space, and draw the eye upward. An inexpensive way to create beautiful window treatments is to take a stroll down the linen aisle of your favorite bargain or discount store. Flat sheets come in a variety of colors and patterns that will give you many options. Tablecloths can also be used to create dramatic window treatments. They also make great shower curtains!! Decorative napkins can be draped over a rod to create a simple and creative valance. Don't sew? No problem, just use a fusible adhesive (for example: Wonder Under) found in most fabric and craft stores, to create a hem that will last through many washings.

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5. **Small Changes, Big Effects:** By making a few simple and relatively inexpensive additions to any room you can create a whole new look. Add splashes of color with throw pillows or area rugs. A simple change in the way you light your room can make a world of difference. Opt for table lamps or floor lamps instead of overhead lighting. Use Candles to create warmth and coziness. Add a scented candle for extra atmosphere. Bring in potted plants and greenery to display on mantels, foyer tables, and side tables. Don't neglect your home's first impression: the front door. Consider giving it a new coat of paint. Add a welcoming wreath and a fresh new door mat. Make the first impression a welcoming one.
6. **Be a Savvy Shopper:** Although the high-end stores can provide a wealth of decorating ideas, they will be sure to rob you of financial health. Check out your local discount, closeout stores for great deals. Their inventory is constantly changing, so be sure to check often. Shop the clearance aisles. Inquire with your favorite stores to see which day of the week they work on markdowns. Check Craigslist for free items or trade with neighbors and friends. Shop yard-sales, thrift stores, eBay, etc. Go hunting on the night before neighborhood trash pickup day for great (and free!) finds. Remember, one man's trash can be your treasure!
7. **Blog It!** It would take all day to visit the dozens of blogs and sites that offer great tips and inspiration. Put Google to work for you and use Google Reader to bring it all to you in one window. All blogs have a special address that you can use to "subscribe" to that page. All you need to do is enter that address (called a "feed") into a Reader of your choice (I recommend Google Reader, especially if you already have a gmail account). Then, every time you login, Reader will get the most recent posts of all your favorite sites and display them in an organized way...all in one window. Even better, deal sites like <http://dealnews.com> let you subscribe to a specific category of deals, such as decor. Doing this will provide you with valuable coupons and sales that you might have otherwise missed.
8. **Borrow, Copy, and Imitate:** Borrow design ideas from magazines and online resources, copy color combinations from catalogs, imitate store showrooms and displays, and use your friends homes as inspiration for your own. Check out your local library for design and decorating books. Don't forget that you can always "Google" it! Once you have your inspiration, modify it to reflect your style and personality. Learn to trust yourself. You and your family are the best judges of what you like and don't like. Your home should be a reflection of yourself.
9. **Keep it simple and clean:** It is often said less is more and this is no exception in decorating. A great way to make your home more inviting and beautiful is to de-clutter and bring the attention to your focal point such as a mantel. Organize in style by using decorative boxes or crates. Baskets make great accents while serving a purpose. Keeping things clean and organized will allow all of your creativity and hard work to stand out.
10. **Be Patient!** You can save a lot of money by waiting for just the right thing. Just as with a diet, it takes patience to achieve the goal you are after. Be willing to say NO. It is not always best to buy the first thing you see. It may be a great buy, but that doesn't mean it's a must buy.