Homes & Gardens

Town Tribune Weekly Guide To Fall Living

Designers Say Almost Every Home Has Too Many of These 5 Things and They Could Be Making Your Space Feel Cluttered



When it comes to certain types of home decor, there is such thing as too much of a good thing, interior designer say. Here, three experts outline five home items that people love to display in excess and, in most cases, could stand to be pared down.

Open Shelves:

Open shelving has its time and place, but it shouldn't make an appearance in every room of the house. Lauren Saab, the founder of Saab Studios, explains that she encounters it all too often in kitchens and bathrooms in particular.

"Open shelving can look beautiful and be functional when it is thoughtfully placed and not overused," she says. "When it becomes the main source of storage though, it can quickly start to feel cluttered and impractical."

Your best bet is to opt for plenty of hidden storage, too, Saab says, noting that deep drawers and cabinets are always useful when it comes to concealing items from view.

"Have the open shelving be the exception rather than the rule, reserved for a few moments where it really adds something," she says.

Decorative Signs:

Decorative signs were especially popular at the beginning of the 21st century, and while they've become a bit less ubiquitous, they're still often overused throughout the home, Lesley Steinberg explains.

"'Welcome!' 'Farmhouse!' 'Powder Room!' 'Laundry!'—there's no need to label every room," says the founder of Lesley Steinberg Interiors.

Keep these to a minimum and enjoy your home as-is.

Throw Pillows:

Steinberg notes that many people fall victim to bringing too many throw pillows into the home.

"If you have to toss them on the floor to sit comfortably, you have too many," she says.

Go ahead and sell or donate any extras that are simply getting in the way.

"Pare down to a few favorites, and remember—they don't all need to match," Steinberg says. "A floral, a stripe, and an animal print can add more interest than a matching set."

Throw Blankets:

On a similar note, having too many throw blankets in the home is also all too common, Gaelle Dudley shares.

"Not every couch or chair has to have a blanket," says the founder of GLDESIGN. "Keep the cozy, most used throws in a basket and try to display the prettiest, most luxurious ones."

Of course, you can feel free to rotate your favorites throughout the course of the year. Not sure what style to showcase when?

"For fall and winter seasons, we love deeper hues like camels, maroons and ivories while spring and summer call for navy, crisp white and blushes," Dudley says.

Tabletop Picture Frames:

Sentimental photos are lovely, but there's no need to cover an entire table with frame after frame, Dudley states.

"Consoles that showcase 10 frames with family pictures are an easy pare down," she says.

Remember, your home doesn't need to resemble a scrapbook. With that, Dudley suggests keeping current photos—as opposed to baby photos of your children—on display.

"Be intentional with your choices, and choose the memories that are milestones versus random photos with less significance," she says.

When it comes to landing on the perfect amount of frames to display, the designer is partial to threes.

"Have fun mixing up the frame styles themselves," she says. "I love to stagger an 8 by 10 inch woven frame with a 4 by 6 inch brass frame and a sweet round shell frame in front."

Your Old Holiday Decorations Don't Need Replacing:
Try These 6 Creative Ways to Make Them Feel Fresh Again



Though they're always filled with chaos, the holidays bring their own routine back to center stage.

Whether you decorate for Halloween, Thanksgiving, and your winter holiday of choice, or whether you're counting down the days to bust out the tree or menorah on December 1, we all have our own way of doing things.

This often includes the same seasonal decor being used year in and year out. So, how do you keep it from feeling rote and boring year after year? Try some of these tricks that will be sure to breathe new life into your old decor.

Put Them Somewhere New:

If you're putting the same plastic pumpkins in the same spots every year, it's no wonder you're bored with your own seasonal decorating style.

Before placing anything, stop yourself from returning the same pieces to the same spots. Look at each piece on its own and consider where else it might work—the nativity scene you put on a bookshelf every year might look nice on the entryway table.

If you're truly at a loss, you may want to force yourself to swap your decor based on location (upstairs decor all goes downstairs this year).

Pick a Theme:

Instead of using all the same things as last year and the year before, create a theme and only pick decor that works for it. The theme can be as simple as a color or a motif—only greens or sparkles or snowflakes. Then, only use decor that fits that theme.

Add Natural Décor:

Without buying anything, you can spruce up your same-old holiday decor with some natural touches from your own backyard.

Add some pinecones to the mantel, or place some branches in a large vase as a statement in the middle of the kitchen island. Consider dehydrating your own citrus and making garlands with them (the leftovers will go great in a cocktail, too).

Weave in a Craft:

Like with natural decor, you can add some handmade pieces to the mix. Maybe this is the year you only put handmade ornaments on the tree. Or maybe everyone makes or paints an individual candle for the menorah to add a personal touch.

Swap Your Lights:

If your festive lights are losing their appeal, you might want to try swapping them for others. Bring the indoor lights outside and the outside lights in. Or the tree lights can be hung around doorways this year instead.

Always ensure that lights being used outdoors are fit for this use before putting them up as they can pose a fire hazard otherwise.

Give It a New Look:

If you're truly sick of some of these pieces and wish they looked different, change the way they look. Spray paint ornaments, hand paint candles, or mix and match a bunch of nativity scenes into one. Do whatever your heart desires and if you end up hating it, just remember you were sick of it before you started.

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