

**HOW TO GIVE YOUR HOME
AN ECO FRIENDLY INTERIOR
DESIGN MAKEOVER**

INTRODUCTION



In terms of your home, when said interior consists of sustainable options, all the better. When it comes to home interiors, sustainability generally denotes eco-friendly decoration and design, using materials that focus on improved air quality and reduced environmental impact. Below is a list of eight sustainable strategies to make your home's interior eco-friendly.

We asked eco-interiors company Moorehouse Family for a bit of advice for a few strategies to make your home's interior design more eco-friendly, and they should know: the firm specialises in restoring old gems for use as boutique vacation homes, and is proud to use around 80% locally sourced salvaged and recycled materials in their re-creations. But you don't need to hire an interior designer to get a great eco-friendly interiors look for your home.

1. Use plants as decorations

This is a no-brainer. Plants provide oxygen, and filter out harmful chemicals from the air. Plus, they offer a natural beauty, ambience and freshness, bringing a little of the outside into your home. Think mint or pine's refreshing scent, or any number of flowers' lovely fragrances. Lilies, bamboo palm or gerbera daisies especially do wonders in improving air quality.



2. Let the light in

The right lighting can make all the difference in space. If you live in a cold climate, always try to maximise the natural sunlight in your space by freeing windows of heavy curtains and blinds – just ensure that your windows are completely secure in terms of insulation so no heat escapes and no unwanted cold enters in. Double glazing and proper window accoutrements like caulking and weather-stripping help reduce air leakage. Another tip is to make spaces as bright as they can be. Avoid painting walls in dark colours, and if possible, arrange rooms so that bedrooms and bathrooms face north (with less sun) and kitchens and living rooms face the sunnier south.



3. Avoid decorating products with VOC content

Volatile organic compounds (VOC) are organic chemicals that easily evaporate at room temperature. They can be found in many common household products including paints, adhesives, household cleaning products, air fresheners, even furniture and carpets. In the enclosed spaces of your home, VOC concentrations can be two to five times higher than they are outdoors. This is bad for homeowners, as VOC's contribute to many health problems, such as eye and throat irritation, headaches, nausea, liver damage, nervous system disturbances and even cancer.



4. Use furniture made from natural materials

Forget chairs and tables made from plastic moulding. To make your home's interior eco-friendly, you need furniture made from natural wood and other organic or sustainable materials. But not all woods are sustainable: look for wood with the Forest Stewardship Council certification stamp to ensure you're not using an endangered species for your furniture. Bamboo is another suitable option, but better yet: buy antiques and used furniture whenever possible.

Additionally, keep in mind that particleboard and medium-density fibreboard (which is made from compressed shaving and sawdust) are bonded together with synthetic glues and resins that often contain formaldehyde, which is a potential allergen to humans and carcinogenic to animals. By contrast, good quality wood furniture is held together by wood joinery, which minimizes the need for VOC-laced adhesives. Table- and countertops should also be made of organic materials such as marble and other stone.

Take a good look around your home. If you see any plastic, polyester, nylon, particleboard, chromed metal, any non-organic or synthetically engineered material, get rid of it and replace it with natural materials.

5. Choose natural textiles & finishings

The list of household items that ought to be crafted from natural materials goes beyond furniture. Fashioning pillows, mattresses, upholstery and beddings from wool-stuffed materials, for example, cuts down on the production of synthetic materials that ultimately end up languishing in landfills. It also means upholstery isn't made from petroleum-based materials and soaked in VOC-laced flame retardants, which can lead to serious health problems like infertility and IQ and developmental impairments in children.

Carpets and rugs should be created from natural fibres (e.g., wool, cotton, jute) rather than VOC-filled synthetics, which are the norm. Any wall finishings should be in wood, ceramic or cork (as in pic 3, below). It may cost a bit more, but it's better for both you and the environment.

Whether it's refurbishing your interiors entirely or bringing a few green changes into the decor, decorating a home isn't child's play. The entire process of redecorating while keeping sustainability in the front-end is intimidating. But picking up green decor elements will be more beneficial in the long run.

Thus, if you are struggling with the ideas that are innovative, elegant, chic and can turn your home into an eco-friendly zone, we got your back! These small yet meaningful green alternatives will help reduce your carbon footprint. Check out these 7 exciting ideas for an environment-friendly décor.

A Dash of Vintage

The most affordable and simple way to positively impact the environment is to buy pre-used furniture. If you are a fan of rugged and distressed decor, this is the best way to attain the theme without affecting the environment. Vintage decor looks chic and will cost you way less than purchasing brand-new furniture from the store.

Pick Sustainably-sourced Raw Materials

If you are passionate about turning your home green, then work with companies or dealers that promote ethical labour standards and fair trade. Select the best raw materials for your furniture, but ensure that they do not contribute to the natural epidemic like deforestation. Make sure all your raw materials are sustainably sourced. It will also support your local artisans and communities that promote eco-friendly decor.

Going Green isn't Pricey

More often than not, people assume that making your home sustainable and green is expensive. But that is ultimately a myth, which is why it needs to be busted. Truth told, 'Green is for everyone'! Choose home décor that is recycled, reused and will last for a more extended period with little or no maintenance.

Go for Non-Toxic Wall Paint

When giving your walls a make-over or re-purposing a piece of furniture, always choose eco-friendly paints. Why? Because these non-toxic wall paints are free from Volatile Organic Compounds or (VOCs), that are harmful to both the

environment and us. Surprisingly, even carpets have been known to emit high levels of VOCs, which promotes the accumulation of allergens.

Get Indoor Plants

Plants are essential for our living. And a well-cared-for indoor plant can infuse a breath of fresh air into your interiors as well as your lungs. Having indoor plants not only enhances the appeal of your room but also increases oxygen and helps purify your home. House plants or indoor plants are the most eco-friendly decoration that adds a natural and fresh accent to your home.

Re-purpose Old Furniture

We know how casual window shopping results in buying new furniture for a living room. But the best way to have a sustainable décor is to DIY your old furniture. It may take a little more effort and elbow grease, but turning your old stuff into all-new is more rewarding. Bring out your creative side and repaint your wooden table or reupholster your chair to match your new décor.

Invest in Timeless Designs

One of the biggest problems that lead to wastage of various materials is the ever changing trends of home décor. A type of couch or chair may be in style this year but goes out of fashion the very next year. This changing pattern can leave the trendy homeowners in a dilemma. Hence, the most eco-friendly way to decorate your home is to invest in timeless designs. This way, your home décor will never go out of style, and you can use it as much as you like before it needs to alter. If your home is in dire need of a makeover, upgrade it with an eco-friendly decoration. Sometimes just mindful and straightforward choices while selecting décor elements can make all the difference. So look for beautiful alternatives that can be found in the most unlikely places to have a sustainable home.

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