

# Pleasures of decorating your dorm room

By: Clarky Lucas

When it's time to pack up and leave for college, students are apprehensive about starting new classes and living in their new environment. As freshmen pile into the residence halls and take a look at their rooms, many are dismayed at how small and bleak they appear. But it doesn't take lots of money to turn a dorm room into a comfortable home away from home; it just requires some creativity and smart shopping.

• **Floors.** As soon as your set foot on the cold tile or wood floor in the morning, you won't have any problem staying awake for that 8 a.m. class. You can give a room warmth and color by using carpets, and they can be purchased inexpensively if you know where to shop. By shopping at a building supply store

for remnants, you can come up with an affordable piece of carpeting. I bought a remnant of blue carpet two years ago for only \$15, and it still is in good condition. Don't spend too much money buying a nice rug because in a dorm room there will be lots of things spilled and dropped on the floor. An expensive carpet will probably be ruined after four years.

• **Walls.** What you hang on the walls of your room can make the room homey and express your personality. Posters of your favorite animals and movie stars along with prints by your favorite painter add brightness to those dull, burlap brown walls. Some cute posters of cartoon characters and inspirational sayings can be found at Wal-Mart for \$3-

\$5. Prints of famous paintings are going to be more expensive. Meredith College has a poster sale every fall where students can buy prints that range in price from about \$12 to \$25. You can cover ugly flaws and nail holes on the walls by hanging up quilts or afghans with a pretty pattern. All of the rooms are furnished with brown, drab cork boards, so students can tack up reminders. You can cover the cork boards with colored contact paper to add some oomph to the room.

• **Extras.** There are lots of little extras that you can put in your room to give a personal touch. Framed pictures of your family and friends are fun to look at and help to battle the homesickness blues. Plants add personality to a room, but they do require some care. Some students even pick out names for their plants and

make it a competition to see how long they can keep them alive. Baskets are an attractive way to store things like hair accessories, lotions, scarves, and belts. Even a comforter or bedspread that is in a fun print or bright color is a decorating device. You can then pile your favorite stuffed animals on the bed. Curtains that match your carpet and bedspread add the finishing touch to a room.

Shopping at discount stores will help you get great bargains and a beautiful room. Most of these decorating ideas can be carried out through a trip to Wal-Mart. There are so many other things to worry about when beginning college that decorating your dorm room should be something you enjoy and not get stressed over.

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