

# Refeathering the nest: Tips on redecorating your home

By JoANNE J. FALLS  
Agricultural Extension Agent

As the years go by, family life situations change. The children may go off to college or move away to be on their own and start a career. You may want to make some changes due to the death of a spouse or a change of marital status.

As a result, you may want to refeather the empty nest and do some of that redecorating you have been putting off.

Or maybe you're moving to a smaller home better suited to your present needs. If so, you are in the updating stage.

First, reassess your furnishings. Take a good look at all those things you've collected over the years.

It may be a simple process to rearrange furniture to make some areas more attractive. Aim for a unified look, rather than a cluttered, collected look.

Think about furnishings in terms of usefulness, sentimental value or meaning to you. Keep the most valued, and give the rest to your children or other relatives. If family members don't want the furniture, give it to Good Will or the Salvation Army.

Does any of the furniture that is left need repairing, refinishing or new slipcovers?

Next, take a look at the walls. A simple paint job with a color change will be less expensive than totally redecorating. Paint one wall to add a new emphasis and interest to a room that's not been changed in years.

If you expect to stay where you are for a long time, redecorate with those elaborate window treatments you've always wanted to complete your decor. Here are some suggestions for customizing those basic window treatments you have:

- Add a valance, cornice or lambrequin to the window.
- Add a laminated, Roman or balloon shade, wooden mini-blinds or shutters.

- Revitalize what's there with trim, braid or contrasting bands for color.
- Change the tie-backs or tie the draperies another way.

If you can afford it, go all out for a totally new look in one or more rooms. Coordinate patterned fabrics - just be sure you can live with the designs for a while.

You've probably collected many items over the years. Upgrade or add to your accessories, and group them for interesting displays. Here are some tips for grouping accessories:

- Use a variety of heights, shapes and sizes.
- Use an odd number of items for your groups. Odd numbers of items can be placed in more interesting ways without lining objects up in rows.

- Aim for a feeling of rhythm and balance when placing objects on shelves. Don't put all your books together on one or two shelves. Mix them with art objects.

- When grouping pictures, think of the group as a single unit or one larger picture. Placing items on one vertical and one horizontal line will create an invisible frame. Mix them with art objects.

Remember that accessories should enhance the decor, not clutter

it up. Many people with large collections rotate them so only part is on display at any one time.

Here are six economical ways to create decorating effects throughout the house:

- Paint the walls to add a bright,

cheerful background. Painted walls can add color and emphasis to neutral furnishings, or provide unity for a color scheme.

- Paint only one wall and the trim to give emphasis to an area, or panel one wall for the same effect.

- Mirror one wall to create a feeling of spaciousness, but make sure it has a good view to reflect.

- A screen is a good portable item which adds emphasis to an area. It can also be used to hide poor architectural features or to re-route traffic.

- If you do not plan to be where you are for more than a few years, keep the window treatments simple and basic. A swag and jabot with cafe-style sheers and the handkerchief curtain are two examples that don't require excessive fabric, and so

are less expensive alternatives.

- Accessories can be used as baskets used for decorative storage. Use accessories for just change the paintings and to give new color to an area.



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