

ADDING CHARACTER TO YOUR HOME



A GUIDE TO CREATING COZY CHARM

HOW TO ADD CHARACTER TO YOUR HOME



Most new(er) homes are built as blank slates without much architectural detail.

The spaces are largely generic, with textured walls, builder grade light fixtures, and hollow core doors. It's just a fact that homes from a century ago have more "built in" character. Today, it's up to the dweller to create the character we want to see in our homes. You can add character to your home for a custom home that has personalized charm.





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01

GET TO KNOW THE POWER OF PAINT

Painting is the single most impactful way to add character to your home. Color can be personal and it can showcase your style in a big way with a small investment. By simply painting a blank wall, you can create the warmth you need to make a room feel like home. Avoid feeling like a bold color is a major commitment by remembering that you can always paint over it. A bold color creates depth and elevates the space. The four walls aren't the only things that can be painted to add character to your home. Painting the ceiling can provide a subtle unexpected charm. When you are considering some character elements, try combining neutral walls with a pop of color on the ceiling. Or a pattern on the ceiling like stripes or even adding a stencil. There are unlimited options when it comes to painting and how it can help you add an element of character. The best thing to do is to be brave when it comes to painting. Paint is a fairly inexpensive and short-term commitment so if it doesn't work out you can try again but if it does work, it will be a game changer for your space.

02

ROLL OUT THE RUGS

As a renter, I became a fan of rugs very quickly. When we were living in a townhouse with the ugliest gray carpet, I used rugs as a way to hide it. Through that, I learned that rugs are much more useful than hiding ugly carpet. Rugs anchor a space, they allow you to split a large room into sections by just rolling out a rug and placing furniture around it. Rugs are also another expression of your style. Selecting the right rug can bring character into your space. Vintage rugs that have a worldly feel can allow your imagination to travel somewhere exotic with the wonders of what the story behind it might be. Geometric patterns and natural fiber rugs give warmth to a space. Not only do beautiful rugs make your home look cozier, they feel cozier. The warmth of a rug underfoot makes you feel much more at home.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE LIGHTING

03

Lighting is something that you don't realize makes such a huge impact until you try it out. Builder grade lighting isn't the most attractive lighting to any aesthetic. In the past, I've always just lived with any lighting that was provided in our rentals - they've always been very standard. When we purchased our Florida house, we've changed out a significant amount of light fixtures, and boy does it make a world of difference. Lighting comes in a variety of styles from modern to vintage and yet the only way to pick good lighting is by picking a piece that fits your personal style. The best tip I can provide when selecting a light fixture is to be creative. While many modern lighting options aren't exactly full of character, you can amp them up by tweaking them yourself by changing out the shade, adding a beads to a chandelier, or even painting the entire fixture. The same can be said for vintage or used fixtures. Often times the vintage pieces will have more character to begin with and you can just bring them into your own style with a few tweaks.

04

ABOUT THE DOORS

Most newer homes have hollow core doors that offer zero character and frankly don't do a very good job at masking noise. While replacing the doors with solid wood ones would be the ultimate character boost, there are other things you can do to help out those builder grade doors. At some point, the standard color for doors became white. Plain white. There is absolutely no rule against painting doors any color you'd like, in fact painting your doors or just one door would add some visual interest to your home. Consider painting the interior doors of your home a bold color, or painting the doors to the outside spaces such as the patio doors or the door to the garage a muted dark color like black or charcoal. Doing so provides an unexpected contrast.

05

TRIM IT OUT

One thing I learned a lot about since purchasing our current home is trim and how much it adds to a space. From wall treatments like board and batten to window and door trim, having some nice millwork goes a long way in adding character to a space. Walls, even with paint, can sometimes feel cold, or make a space feel unfinished without some trim. An easy way to elevate a space is to add a simple board and batten treatment. You could consider doing a wall treatment like this in a bathroom, dining room, or a hallway. Additionally, trimming out other focal areas of your home like a fireplace or a kitchen island can go a long way in providing a touch of charm to your home. Adding molding or trim is a labor of love but it is always worth the work.



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06

OH WALLPAPER

I've long been a fan of wallpaper. I'm fascinated with the history of wallpaper as it dates back well before the 1600s. The elites would hang tapestries on their walls as art but the tapestries would also be a thin veil on insulation. Those not able to afford the tapestries would purchase thinner paper like versions of the tapestries. Since the 1930s in America, wallpaper has gone out of fashion and come back. Today's modern wallpaper isn't the same as the 1990s floral that we pulled from our bathroom. Today, it seems to be a homage to the original wallpaper, a form of art. I'm rather obsessed with fabric prints and wallpaper is like fabric for your walls. Years ago if you wanted to try wallpaper you had to be ready to commit because it was a rather permanent project. Today, there are a million choices both permanent and removable. Removable wallpaper is probably my favorite modern home decorating design element. To me, wallpaper is a really beautiful element of art. Your wallpaper selection says so much about your style or the style of your home.



07

EMBRACE THE STYLE OF THE HOME

What is the style of your home? Is it a craftsman? A victorian? Take a little time to determine the style of home you have, and learn more about it and it's architectural features. Having that information will help bring some of those features that are evident from the exterior, interior. It may not be evident right away what style of home you have so you may have to do a bit of research. You can determine these things by looking at the time in which your home was built and perhaps who the builder was who built the home. If the home is more current, you can take a look at different styles of homes and see which might align best with your own.

08

ONE OF A KIND PIECES

Those special pieces of furniture that you can't resist are the ones that bring the most character into your home. At vintage markets, local thrift stores, and estate sales are where you'll find the furniture that will become a talking point in your home. Those one-of-a-kind furniture pieces bring character to your home that you can't get from an IKEA cabinet or a Target nightstand. You'll treasure those pieces so much more when you are able to tell a story about how they came to live in your home.

09

PART WAYS WITH
CARPET

Carpet, while convenient and comfortable, isn't really the biggest charmer when it comes to your home. If you really want to add character to your home. Consider removing some of the carpet. One small job that you can undertake to bring a little character into your home is to remove the carpet from your stairs. If your first floor already has a hard surface, this is easy to do and will have meaningful results. Pulling up the carpet to reveal wooden stairs and risers is so worth it. You can stain the steps or paint them. Go even further by adding a runner up the steps.

10

MIX & MATCH

If character is what you are looking for, give up the urge to match everything. Whether it's window treatments or hardware, mixing it up from room to room gives a home character. It provides a little excitement and wonder because you never know what will be just in the next room. Use different hardware finishes from room to room. Mix up your drapes from room to room. Bypass the bed-in-a-bag comforter set and mix bedding pieces to come up with a one of a kind bedding combination. You'll create character in your home by giving it your own mix of styles and designs.

