

## 10 Ways to Brighten Your Home

Lights are an important component, but homeowners also should trim greenery and prepare to paint.

By [Karen Dybis](#) | Oct. 14, 2022, at 9:59 a.m.

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Interior designers, home experts and homeowners alike agree: Having a house that feels light and airy is the best way to navigate the hibernation that tends to occur from fall through winter and into spring. [GETTY IMAGES](#)

Andrew Adamo knows how dreary his New York City apartment felt as the [leaves](#) fell and winter's darker skies became more regular. So, to combat the gray, Adamo says he took out the original [lighting](#) and updated every fixture he could.

"I replaced the original fixtures with both large overhead lighting as well as recessed lighting. I added pendant lights in the [kitchen](#)," says Adamo, who is a rare coin collector and the vice president and co-founder of a family-owned precious metals company. "Finishing these fixtures with [LED](#) bulbs completely changed the look of my home."

Looking for ways to brighten a home takes a bit of shopping, some [DIY](#) muscle and perhaps a weekend's worth of work. But interior designers, home experts and homeowners alike agree: Having a house that feels light and airy is the best way to navigate the hibernation that tends to occur from fall through winter and into spring.

[ [READ: 10 Fall Home Decor Ideas From the Pros](#) ]

"The right kind of lighting is key," says Ricky Gonzalez, a senior creative director for American Signature Inc., the parent company to Designer Looks and Value City Furniture. "Bright, glaring light or too-dim light creates a feeling of squinting or straining that becomes uncomfortable. The secret is to find lighting that is soft, natural and bright without being too harsh."

Here are 10 other ways you can add more life into your home through mirrors, new lights and other techniques experts suggest.

## Go All Out in the Lighting Section

Lamps are just the start, most experts agree. "Lighting is so important. When a home is well lit, it feels alive, approachable and comfortable," says Kim Coombs, president and founder of Orlando-based interior design firm KBCO Design. "I love layering different light sources. Lighting at the top and toe kick of millwork, under-counter lighting and chandeliers are all great."



 (GETTY IMAGES)



## Manifest Some Mirrors

Whether you want a small mirror or a whole wall, reflecting light is always the right answer. "Mirrored walls are making a comeback," says Liz Toombs, an interior decorator and president of PRD Interiors in Lexington, Kentucky. "Antiqued mirror panels are a great way to get the look without giving you 80s flashbacks. The purpose of mirrored walls is to reflect light, making the room look bigger and brighter."



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## Debulk Your Doors

Removing your [doors](#) and bringing in a replacement with glass inserts will give you a feeling of both openness as well as more light in a space, says Martin Carreon, broker and owner of SoCo Wine Country Properties in Santa Rosa, California. "Consider replacing your current wood or solid doors with transparent doors like French doors. These doors make a room look bigger and brighter," Carreon says. You could remove your unnecessary doors between rooms like the kitchen and dining room as well to spread more natural light.

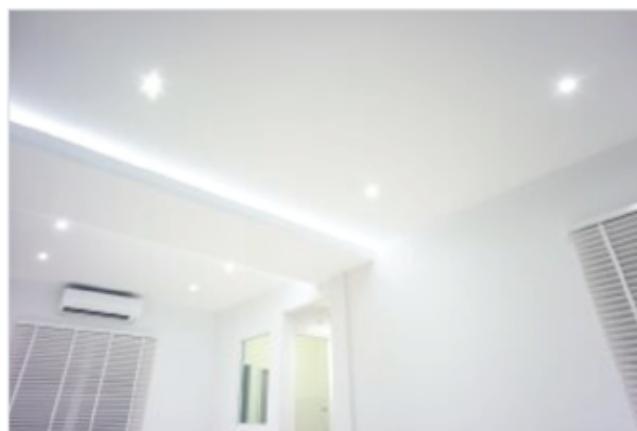


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[ [READ: Is It Time to Replace Your Front Door?](#) ]

## Install Recessed Lighting

Jordan Fulmer, a house flipper and real estate investor in Huntsville, Alabama, says simple recessed lighting can transform a room from dark and gloomy into a bright, welcoming space. "We've added them in several of our projects, and we liked them so much we added them in our own home," Fulmer says. "Instead of requiring a massive enclosure like can lights of the past, the newer versions use LED lights, are very slim and clip into the ceiling drywall for mounting."



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## Remove Clutter

Whether it's just one bag or you bring in a Dumpster, move some of the stuff out of your home to make it feel brighter. "Get rid of [clutter](#)," says Kate Diaz, an interior designer, real estate expert and co-founder of Swanky Den in Miami. "A cluttered space can feel heavy and dreary. Take some time to declutter your home and eliminate anything you don't need. This will help brighten the space and make it feel more open."



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## Revamp Your Rugs and Window Treatments

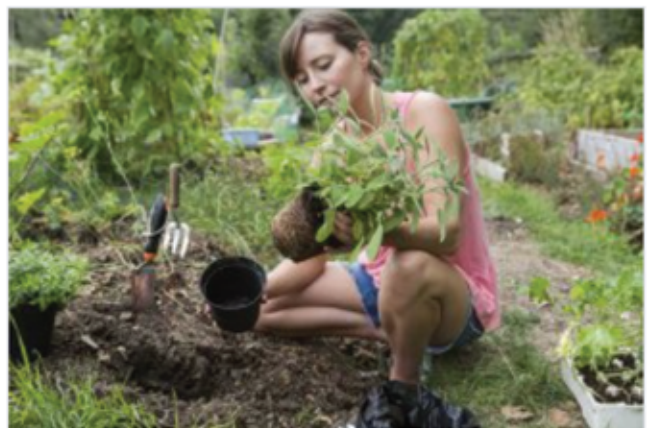
Another simple way to lighten a room is to replace your rug with a foundation piece, such as a neutral, lighter-color rug that you can build on, says Stacy Garcia, an interior designer in Nanuet, New York. She says darker colors absorb light and lighter colors will reflect the light, so a brighter interior begins with the walls and the rug to create your palette. You also could rehang your curtains beyond the window trim, allowing additional light to come into the room and make the windows appear larger.



Opening curtains  (GETTY IMAGES)

## Trim Your Landscaping

To increase light and gain more natural light inside your home, grab the hedge trimmer and get to work, says Theresa Raymond, principal broker and owner of Tennessee Smoky Mountain Realty in Sevierville, Tennessee. "Trim back overgrown shrubs and low-hanging tree branches in front of the windows," Raymond says. "Aside from that, when making improvements to the [landscaping](#) around the exterior of your home, consider how the new plantings will look once they have grown to their full size as opposed to merely how they do now."



 (GETTY IMAGES)



## Paint and Recover Your Furniture

Everyone agrees that new paint can transform your home, but it does the same thing to heavy wooden furniture, says Jane Vranic, co-creator of website [SustainMyCraftHabit.com](https://SustainMyCraftHabit.com) and mother of four in Toronto, Ontario. “All you need is a quart of paint – chalk-style paint is ideal for furniture painting – a brush, a wax sealer and the furniture you’re making over,” Vranic says. “A second idea is to use chair slipcovers to brighten up your kitchen or dining room. The same idea can apply to dark couches in your living room. Even more, you’ll be protecting your furniture from wear and tear at the same time.”

[ [READ: 6 DIY Projects to Tackle in a Weekend](#) ]

## Hang New Artwork

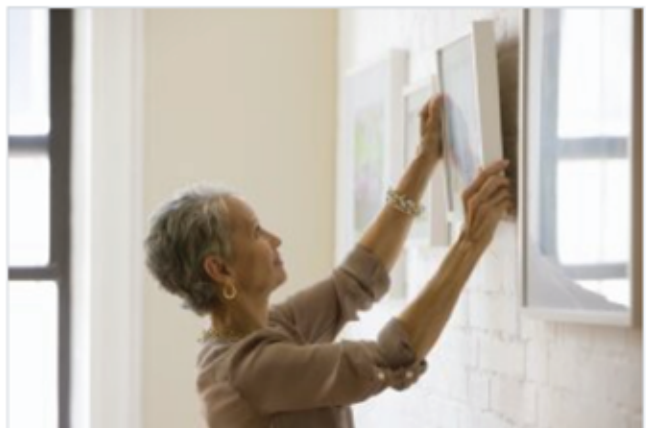
Amber Shay, national vice president of the Meritage Homes design studios in Scottsdale, Arizona, suggests adding color through pictures, photographs or a surprising pop of paint on a feature wall or kitchen island. “Artwork, whether purchased or made, is a creative way to add color to a room,” Shay says. “For example, you can create a wall with framed photographs that you’ve taken over the years or artwork you’ve collected over time. This will help to add interest and a personal touch to your home.”


## Create an Indoor Garden

Coombs says plants are wonderful roommates for fresher air and a sense of nature, brightening an interior in multiple ways. “Whether you love large plants, cute little succulents or fresh-cut flowers, plants help to purify the air and add a nice pop of color,” Coombs says. “My favorite look for a bright interior is a group of white orchids displayed in a low, white planter – it’s modern and beautiful.”



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Woman hanging pictures on wall  (GETTY IMAGES)



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