

## Dorm room design on a dime

Interior designer Cathy Hobbs dishes about budget-friendly ways to trick out your dorm room



Sunday officially marks the first day of summer, which means college freshmen are moving into dorms in droves. Dorm life may be synonymous with cramped spaces, generic furniture and cinder-block walls, but that doesn't mean you can't jazz up your student-housing situation.

"Even though it's a dorm, it's still your home," says [Cathy Hobbs](#), celebrity interior designer and real estate stylist. "For many young people, this is the first space they can really decorate on their own—without the influences of mom and dad."

For most college students, budget-friendly design is key. Hobbs sat down with Metro to share some of her favorite dorm room design tips that won't break the bank.

### PUT UP AN INSTANT WALL MURAL

Painting isn't the only way to infuse your dorm room with some temporary color. "Removable wall stickers are one of the hottest trends in wall decor right now," says Hobbs. "From basic designs to more elaborate ones like gold medallions, they can truly be the design highlight of your room."

To pull it off, Hobbs advises first painting a wall a solid color. From there, it's as simple as "peel and stick." Wall decals are also super-easy to clean up at the end of the year.

### CREATE A CUTE PRIVACY CURTAIN

Between communal bathrooms and shared bedrooms, privacy can be hard to come by when living on campus. If you're looking to claim some private space, putting up a bulky room separator isn't your only option. Instead, opt for a DIY privacy curtain.

"This is one of my most favorite DIY projects ever!" Hobbs says of the no-sew project. "Grab some affordable fabric and some fusing tape, and you're good to go. All you need is a hot iron to fuse the seams together."

### DIAL UP YOUR ARTWORK

Traditional posters have become a cheap-looking staple of dorm decor. But according to Hobbs, upping your artwork game doesn't have to be expensive—you just have to think a little outside the box. Case in point: framed wallpaper.

"Today, wallpaper isn't what you might remember as a child," she says. "Prints are bold, colorful and, in many cases, textured."

The good news is that nearly all retailers that sell wallpaper allow potential buyers to take home free samples. Hobbs adds that these samples are usually substantial in size and perfect for framing. The same can be said for fabric.

"You can mix and match different patterns, put it in a frame, and you've got instant artwork that's gorgeous," Hobbs adds.

### DECK OUT YOUR STUDY AREA

Who says you can't spice up the generic desk that came in your dorm room? When it comes to studying, nothing inspires like a warm, inviting workspace. Hobbs suggests refinishing an inexpensive desk from a thrift store or flea market. You can even paint or lacquer a small piece of raw wood, then place it on a decorative base to bring some style to study time.

Creating a DIY tack board is another great option. "Whether it's a way to post a visual reminder about an upcoming test, or leave a note for your roommate that it's time to do the laundry; tack boards are functional and a staple in hundreds of dorm rooms," says Hobbs.

To make your own, wrap a corkboard with batting, cover it in cool fabric, crisscross with ribbon, add some upholstery tack pins, and you're done.

Moving off campus? The best part is that most of these DIY dorm enhancements can translate well in your next home.