

SALES IN THE CITY

How to Prepare Your Home for the **Change in Season**



By Kelly Kreth



Brrr! As winter's chill slowly comes upon us, just as we collectively unearth our favorite sweaters and sip pumpkin-flavored beverages, we should also cozy up our apartments.

Here are some tips we've garnered from design, staging and sales experts on how to warm up your home without sacrificing the chic!



Winter Greening

According to **Anjie Cho**, architect and feng shui interior designer, one should pay close attention to respecting the environment and conserving energy (and money), even before aesthetics. She suggests removing your air conditioner because air infiltrates through its vents; if it is impossible to remove it or if storage is a big problem, fit the vent with a fabric cover that can easily be found in a hardware store. Do not use plastic, as it is not breathable and may cause condensation, which can damage your appliance.

"Heavy drapes will also help to keep the cold air out and heat in," Cho advises. "Weather sealing on doors or getting a door sweep (or even putting a heavy towel at the bottom of the door) will block the gap, preventing cold air from getting in."

"Don't forget about your foliage!" Cho adds. As it gets colder it is a good time to move plants from window sills or outdoor

spaces. "The extreme difference between temperatures can kill your house plants. Instead, move greenery a foot or two from the sills or doors, or get an indoor grow light set on a timer for the colder months."



Speaking of plants, **George Case**, a licensed real estate salesperson at Citi Habitats, suggests getting floral arrangements of seasonal offerings to help bring the outside in. Think tall branches, evergreens, eucalyptus. The smell will be amazing and conjure up images of the holidays.

Designer and stager **Cathy Hobbs** of Cathy Hobbs Design Recipes agrees, "Why not brighten up your décor by placing cut flower stems in colored bottles or short jelly or canning jars?" She adds that potted succulents—plants having some parts that are more than normally thickened and fleshy, usually to retain water, such as cacti—can be a nice alternative to leaves and foliage.



"Succulents are quite hardy. I especially love them because they last a long time and don't require a lot of care. They are not only beautiful, but they look fabulous in everything from rubbed terra cotta pots to glass vessels filled with stones and moss."

Yule Log

Once your environmental concerns are addressed, it is time to focus on the visual and tactile warmth of your space. If one is lucky enough to have a fireplace—either decorative or wood-burning—a stack of fresh-cut birch logs "creates a narrative—bringing to mind cozy nights around a fire—and will be the visual focal point of your room," explains Case.

Let There Be Light

“Ambient lighting is important as the days grow shorter and darker. Adding low-key fill light—ancillary lighting that fills in where primary lights cannot – will not only highlight areas of the home that may get ‘lost in the shadows,’ but it’s a good way to romance a space on a grey, chilly day,” adds Case.

Seasonal Scents

Scents play a big role in the energy of one’s space. “I love introducing vanilla-based diffusers or candles with Bordeaux or fig notes into a home during the colder months,” says Cristina Dos Santos, an interior designer in NYC.

With the prevalence of wool garb and textiles during the cold-weather season, it is important to use cedar hangers, closet or trunks to prevent damage from moths. The added plus? That great scent permeating through the home on a cold day, conjuring up thoughts of brisk jaunts in the snow-covered woods.

Textural Healing

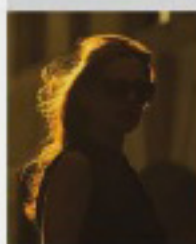
Thin, gauzy or flimsy bedding and curtains, be gone! “Winter is all about thick knits, fur, and wool styles,” says Dos Santos. “Exchange summer pillows and throws for rich and warm fabrics.”

“Interesting decorative pillows made from colorful scarves in gorgeous, fun, winter prints make for an affordable fabric choice when it comes to throw pillows,” says Hobbs.

She adds, “One of my favorite patterns right now is toile. Toile originated in France and typically depicts a scene or a story. Many toile fabrics also come in a myriad of colors (including warm colors like reds and oranges) and in some cases can even be reflective of a particular season.”

Hobbs sings the praises of velvet as well, whether cut or crushed. “I not only love the look and feel of velvet but also the versatility and richness of the fabric.”

Hazy Shade of Winter: The Dos and Don’ts of Color



Christina Dos Santos says color is a major way to modify an apartment’s look for the change in season. “Add deep/bold colors to enrich your space. Changing your accessories to deep charcoals or earth tones brings warmth and comfort to your home.”

Here are some easy and quick ways to update your home for the cold-weather season that don’t require a major commitment and can be easily updated every season—all according to

Cathy Hobbs.

DO!

- Do consider using neutrals such as black, white, charcoal, gray or beige and accent them with a “bold color.”
- Do select a signature bold accent piece and build a color palette around it.
- Do consider an accent wall if you’re afraid to commit to a strong accent color in the entire room. You will probably want to change your colors somewhat for spring again.
- Do bring color into your décor through accent pieces such as artwork and accessories.

DON’T!

- Don’t just tie yourself into one shade of a bold color; consider tints and tones of the same color.
- Don’t use colors that are too grayed down or muted.
- Don’t use colors that are too warm in small rooms; it can make a room look smaller.
- Don’t paint your ceiling a color; it will automatically close in a space.

Visit Anjie Cho <http://www.anjiecho.com>

Visit Cathy Hobbs <http://www.cathyhobbs.com>

Visit Cristina Dos Santos <http://cristinadossantos.com>