



Paint-free ways to brighten your home

Autumn is a beautiful time of year marked by pleasant temperatures and colorful fall foliage. But as vibrant as nature can be in the weeks after summer has ended, homeowners know that the shortened days of autumn mean less light inside their homes, which can become dreary even in the weeks before the arrival of winter.

Many homeowners pick up their paintbrushes in an effort to make their homes more colorful. But homeowners need not embrace their inner Picasso to brighten their homes' interiors. The following are a handful of paint-free ways to add some splashes of color to your home this fall.

Bring nature inside

Flowers and plants can make colorful additions to



Colorful flowers and throw pillows can brighten a home's interior with minimal financial investment on the part of homeowners.

a home's interior. Flowers tend to be aromatic, which can make a stuffy house in which windows need to be kept closed a lot more pleasant. Plants and flowers also can improve indoor air quality. Several studies, including one published in the *Journal for the American Society for Horticultural Science*, have shown that houseplants improve indoor air quality by filtering out volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, that can be harmful to human health. That's especially important come late fall and winter, when homeowners typically shut their windows and keep them shut until spring, making it difficult for fresh air to enter a home.

Invest in some colorful throw pillows.

Natural sunlight brightens a room come spring and summer. But sunlight is increasingly scarce as fall turns into winter, and rooms that do not boast too many colorful accents can quickly grow drab as summertime sunlight dwindles. Instead of buying new furniture, invest in some colorful throw pillows to give a room a more vibrant look. Patterns can be mixed and matched to provide some contrast and transform a room from somewhere to spend time into a sight to behold.

Paper the walls

While many of today's homeowners prefer paint to wallpaper, those who want a less permanent solution to brighten up their homes may want to consider removable wallpaper. Such paper is less expensive than traditional wallpaper, and many do-it-yourselfers find removable wallpaper is easy to both install and remove. Choose a colorful pattern that can turn an otherwise plain wall into a potent palette that adds some life to your home's interior. Because removable wallpaper does not require a significant financial investment, you can experiment with various colors or change things up each month if you so desire.

Add some artwork

Another way to add color to the walls inside your home without dusting off your paintbrush is to hang some colorful artwork. Paintings that feature bold colors tend to draw your immediate attention when you enter a room, and that quality can make you forget the room is not benefitting from natural light. If you want to go the extra mile, find a painting that features colors which match throw pillows or other accessories in the room. This way your walls and your accessories are working in concert to make a room more colorful.

Rug it out

A patterned throw rug is another accessory that can effectively brighten a room without much effort or financial investment on the part of homeowners. When choosing a throw rug, find one that's colorful but does not clash considerably with existing furnishings, as you don't want the rug to draw attention for all the wrong reasons. You have more freedom with regard to rugs if you're furnishing an empty room, as you can choose whichever rug you look and then choose additional furnishings based on the rug.

Homeowners can brighten their homes in various ways, even if they prefer not to paint.

■ Metro Creative Connection

How to prevent eye injuries

Sight is something many people take for granted. Powerful organs, the eyes absorb imagery and the brain converts that information into data the body uses to maneuver through the world.

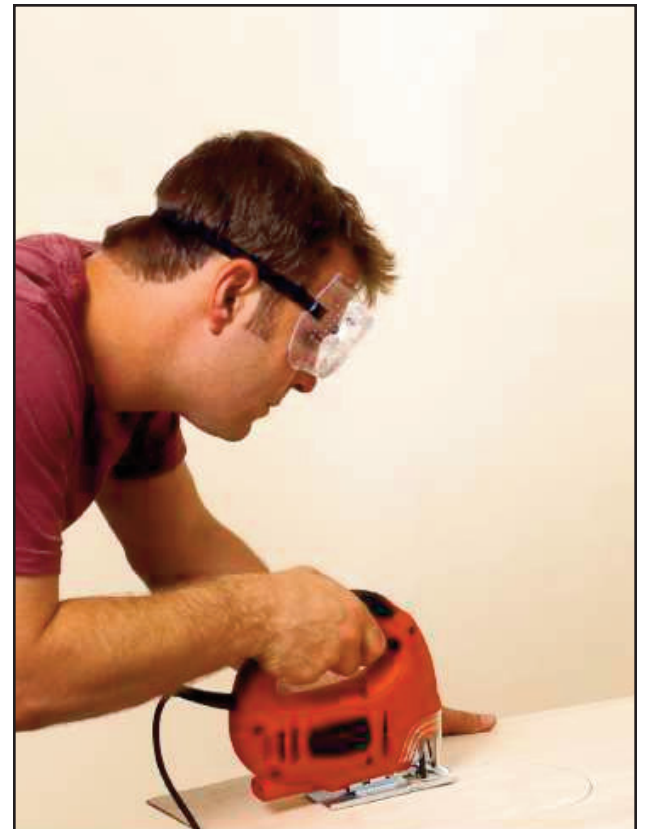
Risks of eye injury present themselves every day. Free-flying particles are everywhere, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention note that dust, metal particles, falling or shifting debris, smoke, and chemicals are some of the most common eye hazards on the job and at home. Injuries can run the gamut from corneal abrasions and irritation to loss of vision.

Millions of eye injuries that impair vision occur each year.

Prevention is a person's best defense against eye injury. Wearing safety glasses or goggles is the easiest way to protect the eyes and can prevent 90 percent of eye injuries. In addition, Prevent Blindness suggests these methods to reduce your risk of suffering eye trauma.

- Provide lights and handrails to improve safety on walkways and stairs, as well as to make surroundings more visible.
- Inspect and remove debris from lawns before mowing.
- Address potential eye hazards, such as overhanging branches or sharp corners, before they can do any damage.

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