



Practical Accents

Functional accessorizing ideas to enhance the whole house

Set the mood with color. . .



You've heard it a million times . . . and it is so true . . . adding color has dramatic effects on how a room makes you feel. Many paint manufacturer websites offer online tools and advice to help you pick just the right color to set just the right tone. According to paint manufacturer Sherwin-Williams, "Colors with yellow undertones will seem warmer, while the same color with blue or red undertones will appear cool." Cool colors—blue, green, violet—invite relaxation and thought. Warm colors—red, orange, yellow—encourage conversation and play. Sherwin-Williams color experts suggest using both warm and cool colors in rooms where you desire balance and variety.

Pick fabrics to withstand the test of time. . .



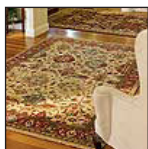
In recent years, we've seen a complete transformation in indoor/outdoor fabrics, also known as performance fabrics, into "super" fabrics that offer great style and design. Gone are the thick, bulky outdoor fabrics of the past. Today, the many uses of these soft, almost luxurious, and vibrant textiles can crossover for use on window treatments and lamp shades in a bathroom or pillows and upholstered chairs in the dining room. This new trend kicks the door wide open to add texture and color to places that you might not have dared in the past.

Get intimate by removing the corners. . .



Large rooms and open foyers often lack warmth or intimacy, robbing a home of that cozy feel. Round out the rough edges by accessorizing the corners. Large plants are often the obvious choice but decorative screens or a freestanding sculpture can add some of your personality to the room while softening the hard angles of the corner. For smaller rooms, capitalize on this "dead" space by working in a corner shelf to be accessorized with books, plants, or trinkets from your travels.

Make hardwood floors a little softer. . .



Carpets do more than add to the aesthetics of a room. From a decorating standpoint, we know how a carpet can define the space and create a relationship between furniture pieces. On a more utilitarian note, carpets help to muffle sounds and add a sense of warmth. Great care must be taken when choosing carpets to place in adjoining rooms. Remember that decorative elements should have a sense of unity and flow within an interior space.

Use mirrors for light reflection. . .



Mirrors in the 18th century were used to reflect light around a room. This not only made the best use of sunlight coming from windows that were limited in size and number but also helped at night with candlelight. Interesting what we can learn from the decorative practices of the past. In these days of energy-saving awareness, this concept is becoming relevant again. Small mirrors on bookshelves and wall units achieve the light reflective result while a little bit of a shiny surface is also very appealing to the eye.