

14 WAYS TO MAKE ANY ROOM LOOK EXPENSIVE

Let affordable accents, clever tricks and simple styling ideas from the experts amp up your space without breaking the bank

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1 IF IN DOUBT, GO DARK

'In kitchens especially, details like dark joinery can make budget fittings appear more luxe,' says Malcolm Kluk, creative director of KLÜK CGDT (klukcgdt.com), a fashion boutique and property development business.



3 THE POWER OF DECLUTTERING

'In your kitchen for example, a simple declutter will automatically make your room feel more spacious and luxe,' says Christine Goosen, furniture designer at Jacobs Collection (jacobscollection.co.za). 'If you have an open-plan kitchen, keep it decluttered and appliances hidden,' says John Autard of the African Institute of The Interior Design Professions (iidprofessions.org.za).



TREAT THE PATIO WITH 'INDOOR' DETAILS

Malcolm suggests amping up an outside space by treating it 'like an indoor space: put art on a wall, or a carpet on the floor'. Anina Malherbe-Lan, co-founder of the African Deluxe Group (theafricandeluxegroup.com), and founder of VIVIDPRIVÉ and VIVIDLUXURY says: 'Quality patio chairs and a solid wood table will go a far way in making the space look luxurious. And beautiful oversized plants in stunning pots, hurricane lamps and plush cushions will make your space feel luxurious, even if it's small.'



4 SEEK OUT AFFORDABLE ART

Art is worth investing in, since it's often timeless and can move with you from place to place. 'Try visiting student exhibitions at reputable schools,' suggests Malcolm. 'There's a good chance you'll buy well.' If you're going the gallery route, be honest about what you're looking for. 'Share your budget so that the gallerist can work within it,' Malcolm adds. Elana Brundyn, chief executive of Norval Foundation (norvalfoundation.org) – a platform for art and culture – agrees that carefully curated art is key. 'Hanging art in a space can transform it,' she says. Can't afford originals? 'Buy museum-edition prints or museum posters,' Elana suggests. 'They are not only by important artists, well researched by the museum curatorial team, but you'll also be supporting the museum.'



5 TAKE THINGS UP A NOTCH WITH TEXTURE

'Velvets always look expensive,' says Rolecia Janse van Rensburg, interior architect and product designer. 'Bring the texture in via scatter cushions, an ottoman or a headboard in a bedroom. Although glossy, shiny fabrics are often considered to look expensive, stick to printed fabric, which will have a timeless feel.' Anina agrees: 'Avoid furniture that uses fake materials like pleather. Rather go for a classic bull denim or a linen look.'



6 CONSIDER COLOUR

'Dark hues are moody and luxurious,' says Malcolm. 'That said, your finishes need to be perfect, since darker shades will also show imperfections. There is also much to be said for cleanliness brought out by a light palette – highbrow and edgy – for spaces such as galleries; ideal if walls and edges aren't perfectly smooth or well finished,' he explains. 'Buy the best paint you can afford and don't skimp on the number of coats required,' says John. 'Don't be scared of using colour and use warmer tones when painting in dark colours.'



8 MIX IN SOME METAL

'I find adding metal to a living space can add a sense of class,' explains Rolecia. 'Rose gold, copper and brass are popular options. Even if it's as simple as an ottoman with a metal base, a drinks trolley or even kitchen pots with metallic accents out on display on a shelf.' Small accents add sparkle and interest to any room.



7 BANISH BLUE LIGHT

'Lighting is everything,' affirms Christine. 'Try to invite as much natural light into your rooms. Be wary of a blue light bulb. Sometimes just replacing your current light fittings with a warmer light can bring huge change.' It's something Malcolm agrees with. 'Lighting sets the mood and tone,' he adds. 'Lamps are really important. We use more lamps than lighting to illuminate vignettes and art – always a soft white rather than a blue, daylight bulb.' Lighting isn't only about colour: A great light fitting can change the feel of a room. 'A feature light fitting front and centre can add a sense of drama to a room,' says Rolecia.

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'Mirrors always elevate

A ROOM: MAKING IT LOOK BIGGER AND ALLOWING LIGHT TO REFRACT BETTER TO LIGHT UP A SPACE,' ADVISES ROLECIA.



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WORK WONDERS WITH WINDOWS

'Adding new windows to areas can dramatically change the atmosphere in a room,' suggests Rolecia. 'By adding a slim, contemporary window, for example, you can elevate a dated house and bring much-needed natural lighting into a space. Alternatively, simply putting in chic Roman blinds can soften and finish a room.'

10 FANCY FOOTWORK

'Edge-to-edge carpets are always luxe, especially in a bedroom,' notes Malcolm. When it comes to the bedroom, Christine also loves the addition of a rug: 'It helps to tie a room together and make it feel cosy and comfortable.'

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BRING IN BOOKS

'A library of books immediately looks luxurious, says Elana.' Add classics to shelves, or invest in some hardback, large-scale coffee-table books for your living room.



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THINK GREEN

'Bring plants into your spaces for a calming effect,' suggests Rolecia. 'Keep your plants looking healthy to improve the mood of a space,' adds Christine. 'Oversized plants such as palms or delicious monsters are a great way to make a space feel plush and well considered,' says Anina.



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SET A FOCAL POINT

'The golden rule for a living room is to keep the focus area in the middle of the room,' advises Christine. 'Keep the corners of the room open. This will make your space feel larger than it actually is.'



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ABOVE ALL, EXPRESS YOURSELF

'Interiors should be a reflection of your personality,' says John. 'From books you treasure to photographs and collections of memorabilia, making your space feel like yours will create character and make it feel inviting and warm.'