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Life

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7 tips for creating a cozy home this fall

Local interior designers share their tips for adding elements of autumn to your decor. Pages 10-11



Autumn can be a great time to update your decor, integrating the rich colors of nature and creating a warm environment to escape the cooler temperatures outside. It's the perfect opportunity to create a space that will lift your mood throughout the months ahead.

With a few simple steps, you can make your home cozy and welcoming this fall. We spoke with these local interior designers to get their take on fall decorating trends in the Miami Valley:

Jeanne Behm of Alacarte Designs in Dayton

Renee Beerck of Centerville Design Associates

Judy Kurtz of J. Kurtz and Associates in Kettering

Deb Boles of Deb Boles Design in Dayton

Read on for ideas from the professionals on how you can make your home more beautiful this season.



Color

Traditional fall colors – deep oranges, reds and golds – are all excellent choices as accents for this season.

However, it's not necessary to stick to just those colors to warm up a room. "The trends this year are rich plums and purples. I'm also seeing a lot of darker greens," Beerck said.

Boles is partial to yellow. "Winter can be so depressing, and having a nice, shiny color in your home can make you feel better," she said. She suggested decorating

with yellows, blues and greens that have a gray – or cooler – color tone to them.

All the decorators recommended purchasing furniture in neutral colors. "Keep the furniture in a neutral color so you can change pillows and throws for your splashes of color," Behm said. "It's more cost effective."

In the end, the best option is always to choose colors that match your tastes. "You really don't have to worry about trends. It's always best to decorate with colors that you enjoy," Beerck said.

Be eclectic

The days of matchy-matchy furniture are gone. Not only does your sofa not have to match your chairs, it's probably best that it doesn't.

"What I tell my clients is that you want your home to look collected. You want different interesting pieces, whether it's a sideboard or a unique accessory. It makes a huge impact. Bring a bit of yourself in – if you're afraid of it, do it," Beerck said.

Sometimes all it takes is just one new item to really liven up a room. "Find one special piece that you love and add it to your decor. You'd be amazed at the impact one piece can have," Boles said.

People are taking different trends and mixing them, such as mixing contemporary styles of furniture with traditional styles. "That works as long as the colors are the same or blend well with each other," Boles said.



Artwork

Updating your artwork can be a great way to switch things up for the fall.

Several of the designers recommended trolling local art shows for original and local art. "I think it's great to visit a community art show and support local artists in Dayton," Boles said.

Instead of looking for large framed art, purchase smaller pieces and group on a wall. Add in a few family photographs and you have a conversation starter.

"It really gives it more punch and interest," Boles said. "You want an element of surprise, something unexpected. When

people walk into a room, they're looking for a focal point."

If you choose to hang pictures of your family, consider having the photographs done in black and white. "It's a beautiful way to display photos," Beerck said. "A lot of times I do a gallery wall of floor-to-ceiling pictures."

She recommended hanging the pictures on a grid based on the size of the mats. "If you have a 2-inch mat, you'll need a 2-inch space to the side of the next picture," she said. Also, you can achieve a cleaner look by framing all the pictures in the same color, typically black.

Walls

"Paint your walls; the cheapest way to decorate is to change your wall color," Boles said.

A little effort goes a long way. "If your walls start looking dingy, it doesn't give you a good feeling," Kurtz said. "A fresh

coat of paint can really brighten a room."

Wallpaper is also coming back into vogue, although it's not the tiny prints you may remember from the 1980s. "Wallpaper is huge right now," Beerck said. "It's gorgeous and very large scale. Some of the repeats are 3 to 4 feet long."

Accessorize

Update your pillows and throws to bring autumn colors into your rooms. "I love pillows," Boles said. "To me, the more the better." Vary the colors and sizes to create visual interest and consider putting them in unexpected places, such as the floor.

Seasonal pillows – ones that follow Halloween themes, for example – can add a touch of whimsy to a room, but use with caution. "If you display pillows that have to do with the seasons, have only one or two. Sometimes less is more. You don't want to overdo it," Kurtz said.

Another easy way to add color and coziness to a room is to add a rug to the floor. To tie things together, make sure a few of your new pillows match some of the colors in the new rug.

Keep your lamps but give them a fresh look by changing out the shades. Replace

a tapered shade with a barrel shape or hang tassels from the current shade to create a pop of color.

A few well-placed objects can give your room an autumn vibe. Behm of Alacarte Designs had several ideas. "Look for anything earthy in appearance, whether it's ceramic pieces or wooden vases with beautiful grains of wood or pottery in a nice deep ochre shade," she said. "Those are things which can really pop a room.

You can never go wrong with fresh flowers. "I love flowers in the house. I keep them all year round," said Kurtz, who keeps a collection of baskets and small vases handy for flower arranging. "For fall, bring in some pumpkins or gourds. I put them on my mantle."

Beerck has noticed a more exotic floral trend. "Orchids are huge," she said. "This past year or so, when we get them in the showroom, they disappear. People like them because they're different."

Get fresh ideas

Sometimes it can be hard to know where to start. "The problem with a lot of homeowners is they live with it every day and can't see the need for change," Beerck said.

Invite a trusted friend to give your home a once over or hire an interior decorator to provide advice. If you want to go it on your own, there are numerous websites and magazines that can inspire you.

The effort will be well worth it. "You want to feel comfortable in your own home," Behm said.

Rearrange

One of the easiest and most inexpensive ways to update your look is to simply rearrange your furniture. Flip your couch to where your armchair sits. Move a

favorite table from your bedroom into the living room and move your end table to the hallway. It's a tip all the pros recommended. "We do that a lot, restaging a house with what they have," Beerck said. "We walk

through a home and find new ways to arrange the furniture they have." It's also a decorating option that fits into everyone's budget. "With the economy being what it is, switching is perfect," Boles said.