

Unique Ways

TO USE YOUR TAX REFUND TO SPLURGE ON HOME DÉCOR



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You cannot spell "refund" without "fun," and that certainly applies to good ol' tax time, too.

If you are looking for quick and easy ways to use up the tax refund from the IRS on home décor, the obvious choices are things like buying a new sofa or dining table or repainting some walls. You could even get into the spring spirit and start buying new outdoor furniture and accent pieces.

Those are all well and good (and quite practical), but why go the simple route when the whole point is to have fun?

Here are some ways to upgrade that refund into fabulous new home décor!

ADD AN ACCENT WALL

We have all seen accent walls made by using a different, bold color of paint, but that is not your only option here. You can jazz up a space with wallpaper, tile, or even shiplap. And guess what? It does not have to cost you that much time or money.

Wallpaper is making a comeback. With bold patterns and easier application and removal processes, it is no longer something to bemoan. Small spaces are great places to use wallpaper because it really does make such a statement. Consider adding wallpaper to a powder room or water closet.

If you are adding wallpaper to a larger room and want a more neutral look, consider grasscloth. Just remember that unlike regular wallpaper, you can and will see the seams. If that is going to drive you nuts, go with another option.

Tile is another great way to make a statement. If you have a coffee bar, consider adding a backsplash to it instead of regular drywall. You will not need that much tile most likely and you do not need (or potentially even want) to match your kitchen backsplash. It is a great way to add texture and interest.

And if you want to combine both of the above (tile and wallpaper) you can, and it can look absolutely stunning. This works best in a powder room because of the small space. Try placing wallpaper on three of the walls and then tile that runs all the way to the ceiling on the fourth wall. You will be amazed at the results, and again, the cost does not have to add up to much at all.

Not interested in wallpaper or tile? There are other options from very thin brick to stacked stone and even shiplap. You can install these on just one wall in a room, a bedroom for example. It really adds texture and becomes the focal point of the room.

No matter how you choose to use your tax refund on your home, an investment in updating your home décor is always a great idea. Depending on what you do, you could even increase the value of your home in the process.

REUPHOLSTER OR REPURPOSE

Sometimes you just need to refresh your existing furniture pieces. New upholstery on that tired old armchair or your dining chairs can bring new life at a fraction of the cost of buying an equivalent piece of new furniture.

A bold pattern or just a fresh neutral update after years of wear and tear can do wonders when it comes to transforming the entire space.

Or, just like in the kitchen, you can add some paint. This is a great option for brick or stone fireplace surrounds, wooden sideboards, and built-in bookshelves throughout your home. Black is a particularly edgy and yet classic color.

Black acts like a natural eyeliner and is a great accent color to carry throughout your home.

Of course, blue or gray or any other color you like can also be the new black. Just pick what works for you and your home.

INVEST IN A STATEMENT PIECE

If you have been looking to add some "oomph" to one of your rooms, a standout piece of furniture, artwork, or other décor can do the trick and completely change the vibe. There are options for every price point depending how much Uncle Sam is returning to your pockets this year.

It can even be a great way to add an accent color. A teal dining table in an otherwise neutral kitchen draws attention and a touch of fun to the heart of the home. Or buy new armchairs for your formal dining room or living room in whatever bold color your heart desires, and curtains that tie in without matching completely; you want to keep things interesting, after all.

Artwork is another great way to change up a room, and can cost a little or a lot depending on where you shop.

If you are looking to spend a little less, you can invest in accent pieces instead. In the living room, swap in some new pillows and accent items while also painting the backs of your built-in bookshelves a matching color. This will make the space feel fresh.

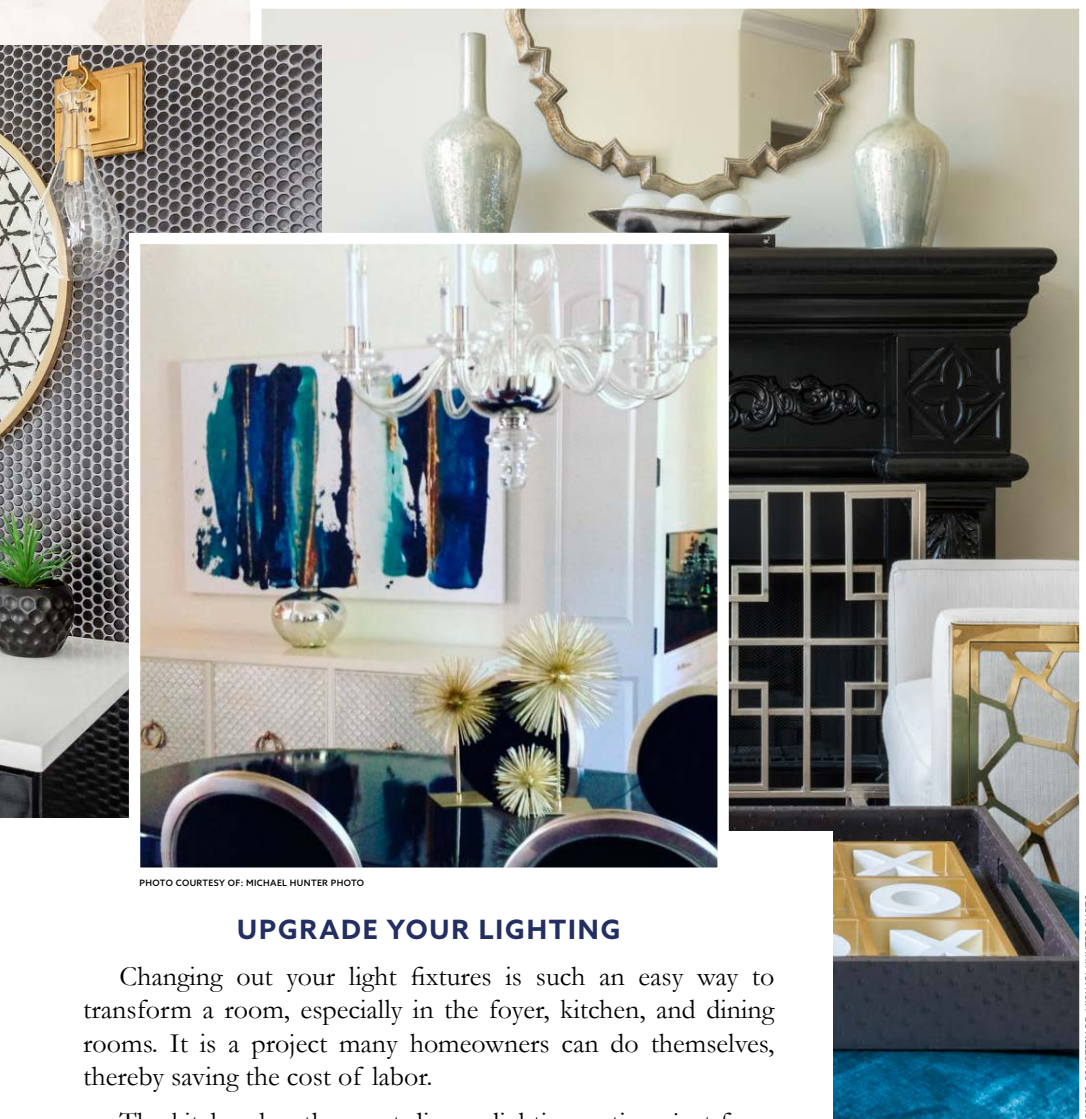


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UPGRADE YOUR LIGHTING

Changing out your light fixtures is such an easy way to transform a room, especially in the foyer, kitchen, and dining rooms. It is a project many homeowners can do themselves, thereby saving the cost of labor.

The kitchen has the most diverse lighting options just from being the hub of the home. Even just swapping out one or a couple light fixtures can make a big impact. The lights over your kitchen island should be decorative yet functional since it is an area where you will eat, prepare food, talk, and even work. The fixture over your dining table can be more decorative, adding another layer to the space.

One of my main rules when picking light fixtures for the same space or rooms that are adjacent to each other is to make sure they are cousins, but not sisters. This means you want them to coordinate but not match completely. For example, while all will coordinate, choose fixtures with round globes over the island and dining table: perhaps go with a pendant light over the island and something with a geometric shape above the dining table. Both have round globes, which tie them together, but their overall structure is slightly different (and you can even use different metal finishes).

And do not hesitate to look at lighting elsewhere in the home. New table or floor lamps in the living or dining room are great options, and a chandelier in the bedroom is not out of the question.