

# 6 Ways To Give Your Home A Five-Star Makeover On A Budget



Glamour, panache and elegance are probably three words that define luxury interiors the best. But these don't have to be limited to posh hotels; you can also experience the comfort, opulence and the high-life at home. All you need to do is make a few changes and add some extras to your home. Read on to bring home the magnificence of a hotel!

**Create Eye-Catching Seating**  
The living room is the nucleus of your home and a spot to socialise. Create a functional yet impressive seating arrangement

with multiple pieces of furniture rather than just a sofa. Consider long sofas, tub chairs, and lightweight pouffes that provide both cosiness and flexibility for social distancing. Additionally, invest in a beautiful office table and lamp to create an ideal workspace that will spark conversations about your work-from-home routine.

**Rethink The Lights**  
Create a warm and joyful atmosphere with ambient and layered lighting. Incorporate hanging lights such as chandeliers, pendant lights, and string lights throughout

your home. Adorn the outdoors with starry lights, uplighters, and downlighters. Consider draping string lights over hedges and trees, ensuring the lighting is ample yet not overly bright.

**Add Wallpapers And Artwork**  
Spruce up your home without the hassle of painting. Classy wallpapers and eclectic wall art can infuse charming allure into any space. Use them to highlight specific walls, and consider bright-coloured artificial flowers in decorative vases to bring variety and vibrance to your décor.

**Embrace Greenery**  
Don't you love the touch of green in the lobby of a luxury hotel? Incorporating indoor plants is a great way to reconnect with nature and bring in elegance. Arrange them as part of your interiors, placing them in stylish large pots as corner or centrepieces. You can also create assortments of plants in different sizes and shapes for various nooks, decorate with small pots on display



shelves, or hang them in corners.

**Pick The Right Furnishing**  
Pay attention to curtains, draperies, sofa upholstery, and blinds – these have the potential to elevate the ambience to a luxurious level. Opt for materials such as silk, damask, velvet, and satin, which boast a glossy finish that imparts a radiant glow to any room. Consider options like wool, fur, or viscose when considering carpets, as



they offer a soft and comfortable sensation underfoot. Alternatively, Persian or sisal carpets can enhance the overall aesthetic of your interior space. By carefully choosing these furnishings, you can add a touch of opulence and create an atmosphere reminiscent of a five-star experience.

**Choose The Apt Colour Palette**  
Have you ever noticed the serene and



gentle colour palettes often used in hotels? These shades are carefully selected to create a soothing atmosphere without being overwhelming or loud. Soft hues can evoke a sense of leisure and relaxation. Consider incorporating light blue, beige, or subtle bronze on the walls or ceiling to establish a smart and cosy ambience.

For an added touch of elegance, you can even introduce gold tinsel paint to infuse a hint of luxury. Alongside colours, patterned wallpapers can be a fantastic choice to enhance the room's character and beauty. Explore options like classic damask, nature-inspired prints, or delicate traditional motifs that can fill the space with charm. Additionally, incorporating smart metallic accents can bring a dazzling touch to your living room, elevating its overall aesthetic.

## 5 Natural And Earth-Friendly Cleaners One Can Make At Home

One of the most basic of home care needs is cleaning. While we strive always to maintain a clean, positive, and happy living space around us, the very process of cleaning may actually be harmful and cause a series of adverse health complications. Some of the most commonly used households cleaners we purchase today are loaded with chemicals like Phthalates and Triclosan, found in dishwashing liquid soaps, toothpastes, and deodorants while sulphates are common in detergents and laundry soaps and even in some shampoos. These chemicals have documented impact on health and are known to interfere and affect hormonal and endocrine functions, reproductive functions, and even cause respiratory disorders when exposed to, over a longer period of time! Anamika Sengupta of Almitra Sustainables points out ways to adopt natural solutions to a clean and earth friendly lifestyle

Effective solutions to these are easy home-made cleaners that are not only safe



and effective but also economical and use mostly items from the kitchen! Let's get started with 5 simple home cleaning agents and how they can help keep your home safe and beautiful!

**Herb And Spice Infused Vinegar**  
Made simply using household herbs

and spices, and white/ apple cider vinegar, the herb and spice infused vinegar is one of the most effective and refreshing all-purpose cleaner for homes. One can use a variety of herbs, like mint, tulsi, lemon-grass or neem leaves, and spices like cinnamon, clove, and ginger, to add to the vinegar. The combination can not only help create a signature scent and flavour to the cleaning liquid, it also comes with myriad anti-fungal, anti-viral, anti-bacterial properties. It can be simply made by steeping the herbs and spices overnight, in a jar full of vinegar and then straining the mixture to create your own all-purpose cleaner. This can be used as a surface cleaner on metal and ceramic, and be used either by diluting it, for regular cleaning, or undiluted, on stubborn stains. Apart from the above mentioned benefits, it is also safe on skin and harmless around children and infants.

**Lemon Infused Vinegar**  
Another combination that has been used effectively for ages by our forefathers,



is the lemon and vinegar combination. Using peels of lemon, lemon rinds, and other citrus peels like orange and sweet lime, in vinegar, one can create a refreshing and potent cleaning agent. While it is ideal for all types of cleaning, this combination is most effective for cleaning utensils, cast iron vessels, kitchen sink, and even toilet and bathroom floors etc. Adding a pinch of salt on the utensils with stubborn

stains, and using the lemon infused vinegar, can not only make the utensils clean but also help remove food odour.

**Soapnut Multi-Purpose Cleaner**  
Another potent natural cleaning agent is soap-nuts or reetha. Used popularly among natural cleaning enthusiasts as an effective laundry soap, this is easy to make and can be prepared in a variety of combinations, at home. From infusing herbs like tulsi, mint and lemongrass to adding orange and lemon peels, this cleaner provides an effective yet safe cleaning for fabric, for floor and has even been used as a hair cleanser.

**Coconut Coir**  
Coconut has been one of the most widely used fruit and it has been known for its versatile uses. Replacing regular scrubs with coconut coir is the easiest and most effective for scrubbing. Apart from being a natural exfoliator, it has its unique anti-microbial properties, and is known to be safe for use on delicate surfaces as well as on tough stains.

## Expert Advice: Navigating Toxic Work Relationships With Confidence



The term 'toxic' has snuck its way into our everyday vocabulary like an uninvited guest who just won't leave. Amid the vast tapestry of human connections, it is used to describe relationships that are more hazardous than harmonious, the ones that relentlessly drain you and offer little in return, leaving you in an endless loop of emotional chaos. We're not talking only about instances of love gone sour but rather the many hues of toxic relationships we allow in our lives.

The quote "People don't leave bad jobs, they leave bad bosses" has long resonated with many but, in the past few years, its relevance has only grown stronger with the addition of toxic colleagues to the mix.

"While this can look different for different people, the question to ask is: Is this job taking away more from me than it's giving me?" says Devika Kapoor, a Mumbai-based counselling psychologist and founder of Instrength Counseling. "If the answer is yes, it's time to move on. Having a toxic coworker can be extremely detrimental to an individual's mental health. It can impact your self-confidence, leaving you with feelings of anxiety, ner-

vousness, unsafety, and a lack of support. These can also extend beyond the workplace, permeating into other areas of your life, manifesting as a lack of proper sleep, the inability to relax, constant pre-empting of negative consequences and, in some cases, panic or anxiety attacks."

There is no glory in being in a place that isn't feeling safe. Ahead, we're listing down tips to deal with the toll of working with a toxic colleague:

Try and confide in someone you feel safe with at work.

Try gathering additional support in terms of emails/ conversations to substantiate your claims as some organisations might require this to initiate any action.

Clearly communicate your availability or bandwidth. Ensure you aren't messaging or responding to them outside working hours.

While at work, using grounding techniques such as deep and intentional breathing can help. You can also release the tension that your body might be holding by walking, moving slowly or fast to music, etc.

Request for an internal transfer, if possible.

## If You Want To Be Happy, Embrace Your Pain



Anyone who knows the practice of mindfulness knows that they have to go home to the present moment. When you do that, two things can happen. You might find there are so many conditions of happiness available right here and now. When you breathe in and bring your mind home to your body, you are established in the present moment. You find that there are so many refreshing and healing elements available in the present moment. There are also so many conditions of happiness available in the present moment.

With that awareness, it is easy to generate a feeling of joy and happiness. You can do this in order to nourish yourself with joy and happiness. But sometimes, when you go back to the present moment, you may encounter a painful emotion that is within you. We all have painful feelings or emotions that manifest from time to time. But when it begins to manifest, you don't like to be there so you try to run away, pretending it's not there. So no one is

there, to look after the painful feeling. Even if the present moment is unbearable, it is still our only chance to do something in order to calm the pain down and to transform it. But most people don't do that because they are afraid that when they come home to themselves and feel the pain inside, they may be overwhelmed, by suffering. That is why they run away. Or else we escape into the past or future in the hope of forgetting, whereas only the present moment is real.

Most people also try to cover up the suffering inside by the practice of consumption. We read magazines, watch television, find something to eat, listen to music or pick up the phone to talk. We hope that by doing these things, we don't have to confront the suffering in us. And we allow that pain to continue to grow in us. The practice of mindfulness helps us to go home to the present moment, so that we can understand the suffering and find a way to calm it down and transform it. So, the next time you

find the present moment not pleasant, do not think that running away from it is the best way. It may be a chance to stay in the moment and look deeply in to the nature of your suffering.

If you know how to practise mindful breathing or mindful walking, you can generate the energy of mindfulness. This will help you to be strong enough to recognise pain and embrace it tenderly. In a few minutes, you can calm it down. If there are other practitioners practising with you, you can profit from their energy of mindfulness and compassion.

Getting in touch with the suffering brings about an understanding of the suffering and the energy of compassion. These have the power to heal you and the people who happen to be around you at the time. And if there is a group of people practising together, embracing the suffering with tenderness, they will experience a collective energy of compassion. When they suffer less, they are in a situation to help other people do the same.

