



These Interior Design Tips Can Elevate Any Home

Cut the clutter and trust your tastes.

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No matter where your current living situation falls on the “freshman dorm” to “penthouse suite” scale, your taste is constantly evolving—so it’s probably time to honor that and elevate your style. [ESTATENVY](#) caught up with interior designers [Anthony Michael](#) and [Nadia Gordon](#) to find out how the average person can take their space’s look to the next level. What does it mean to elevate your interior design style? Like choosing the right outfit for a big event, defining your ideal decorating style may take trying a few things on for size. “Elevating your style is about really getting out there, editing, curating, seeing different things and choosing what you like, and what you don’t like,” said Michael. “Eventually, a common denominator will emerge in your style choices.” To begin this trial and error process, go on an inspiration quest. “I tend to go junking, antiquing and [resale store-hopping](#) when there’s bad weather on a weekend,” said Michael. “I’m looking for something unique that pops out and makes me pause.” Tip 1: Choose the right furniture. Consider how your furniture relates to your home’s

space and architecture. “You may purchase a beautiful accent chair, but it will be off balance if it is competing with an extra large sectional next to it,” said Gordon. “Small spaces will look even smaller when they are filled with bulky furnishings. A beautiful rug will not have the desired impact if it is simply too small for the area.” And just because you already own pieces of decor doesn’t mean they’ll jive with your new digs. “Say a couple is moving from a contemporary condo to a house in the suburbs,” said Michael. “Their old furniture from the condo will be completely swallowed up in the big house.” Instead, work toward building a cohesive story. Tip 2: Color inside the lines. Release your inner artist with paint choices—but remember to elevate, not just express. “I absolutely encourage bright and bold ideas, but too many colors can make an interior look cluttered. A monochrome color palette with just one accent color will give you a more sophisticated look,” said Gordon. But don’t choose a paint color before the full textile and color scheme is put together. Instead, match the room’s paint with your existing pieces. “The easiest thing to do is match,” said Michael. “You can do it electronically, or you can go to any paint store and custom mix the paint.” Tip 3: Arrange with purpose. Creating a focal point in the room can tell a story and lend visual balance. “It could be a large painting above your bed, a nicely dressed fireplace, a window with textured drapery or an accent wall,” suggested Gordon. Create smaller, less intense points of interest by purposefully grouping things together. “It may be an accent chair with a small side table and a floor lamp in one corner, a console table with a cute pouf below and a tasteful painting above in another, a well-dressed bookcase somewhere else. This trick will give your space a rhythm, it will force your eye to move,” she said. But skip the tchotchkes whose only purpose is to take up space. Michael warns against bundling too many small items together just to fill up empty spaces. “You begin to see tiny little groupings emerge, like groupings of picture frames,” he said, adding that this can be a slippery slope to weighing your style down. Tip 4: Don’t let sentimentality overtake design. One common decorating mistake is letting your emotions dictate your style. “People think ‘We have to keep that chair because it’s our grandmother’s. That chair was Aunt Ruth’s. That picture was a wedding gift.’ But you can actually do whatever you want!” said Michael. Start with functionality, and don’t be afraid to get rid of things that no longer serve a purpose. “In life, we often need to purge, whether it’s people or things, to get a clear view of where we’re going and where we want to go,” said Michael. “We become the caretaker of all these items of sentimentality and obligation, and in a way, it holds us back in life.” Tip 5: Trust yourself and go for what you like. If you allow yourself to evolve and be true to your changing tastes, your home’s style will continuously elevate. “Be brave enough to stand out from the mainstream and simply be creative with your ideas,” said Gordon. “Do something extraordinary! Paint your ceiling a different color than white, purchase that funky painting you have been eyeing for months, implement something that is you and only you!” “You really have to allow yourself that voice within that says ‘This is me, this is what I’m comfortable with, this is where I want to go,’” said Michael. The sky’s the limit.