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5 Budget Ways to Warm Your Decor Through Winter

By Kathleen Wilson

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Now that the holidays are over, and the decorations are put away, you may be wondering what now? Remember that Spring is still several months away, and you're best bet for keeping your rooms inviting during the dead of winter is to add warmth and comfort. And if you are like me and don't have a lot of extra cash laying around after the holiday crunch, use these ideas to make major changes in your rooms, for minor cash.

- 1.Rearrange. Create more intimate furniture arrangements, or just try something new! Move seating to create areas where people can easily talk, or group them around the fireplace or other focal point.
- 2.Use candles! Candles are relatively inexpensive, and should not be saved just for special occasions! Group them together, combine them with plants, or set them in front of a mirror. If you feel using them too often will cramp your budget, set aside one meal a week where you ceremoniously use them, such as Sunday dinner.
- 3.Place throw blankets casually over chairs and sofas for your loved ones to cuddle up in. A great way to buy these inexpensively is to check your fabric store for clearance sales on polar fleece. Buy 1 to 1 ½ yards for each throw, then use scissors to cut fringe on the two ends. This fabric doesn't fray, comes in a wide array of patterns and solids, and does not need to be hemmed or sewn! I bought enough for several and paid less than five dollars for each throw! Oh, and did I mention it is extremely soft and warm?
- 4.Set out well read books on end tables to encourage those in your home to use those throws, and who can not remember a fond winter's day cuddled up in a warm sofa with your favorite novel? (Oh, and you might want to stock your pantry with cocoa and tea, just in case.J)
- 5.Layer your fabrics! Add one or two topper fabrics to your tables, layer several towels over each other in your bath and kitchen, add a valance to your window treatments. Remember this doesn't have to be expensive, use leftover fabric from your other projects, visit your local thrift store, or use unused quilts, coverlets, sheets, tablecloths, and cloth napkins from your linen closet.

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All of these ideas are quick, easy, and inexpensive, and can be used throughout your rooms. So take a few hours and see how little changes can create cozy comfort in your own home.

Kathleen Wilson is the author of "Quick Decorating Ideas Under \$20: The Budget Decorator's Bible" and editor of The Budget Decorator. Visit this free ezine at <http://www.TheBudgetDecorator.com> for more great ideas, and for information on ordering her book.

Winter House Preparedness

By Kadence Buchanan

I know, it is still summer time, but winter will be here before you know it, and before wearing your jackets again you should first be prepared for the seasonal change of your house. In fact, during winter times, we all see our homes as a "nest " where we can find warmth and relax without shivering to the bone. But is your home a friendly and cozy place for you and those you love? Or is your décor so gloomy that people go outside just to warm up? If you wish to make your home a warm and inviting shelter this winter, read the following advice.

- Decorate your house with slipcovers, pillow cases and accessories in rich warm colors, like red, orange, brown, green and gold. You can also garnish your coffee table or fire place with fall foliage or pine boughs to create that earth-like feeling. Additionally, place treasured pictures of family in warm wood frames all around your house.
- In case you are able to handle a larger project, consider painting your walls in rich shades of red, orange or yellow. That is a wonderful way to brighten your winter days!
- Select to embellish your furniture with soft and plush fabrics that will make you never want to leave the couch or beddings. Cushions and upholstery could be velvet, mohair and chenille. You can also use throws over chairs and sofas as the layering of fabrics adds richness and texture to the room making it more inviting.
- Buy lots of candles. Place them along your dining table, fireplace, or mid-coffee table and decorate them with beans and small mirrors for an extra lighting effect. Select scents like vanilla or cinnamon as they evoke feelings of comfort.
- If you have a fireplace, move your sofa and chairs closer to it so as to add to the warmth of the room and in order to add to your house dimension and elegance, consider layering smaller rugs on top of your carpet or main rug, in front of the sofa or armchairs of your living room.
- Add extra lamps instead of overhead lighting for a more intimate ambiance and use drapes to create the feeling of comfort and intimacy.
- Replace frequently your main living room flower arrangements and add more warm-tone accessories like gold, brass and copper.

5 Budget Ways to Warm Your Decor Through Winter

– Arrange furniture in groups. A cozy reading corner with a comfortable, over-stuffed chair, table and lamp or a small table and a couple of chairs or footstools will be enough for your family members to sit together and relax.

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