

Homes & interiors

Inspiration to help transform your living space

NORTH OR SOUTH?

SMART REVIEW Picking a locality to invest your money in isn't easy. Find out what North and South Bengaluru have on offer. On Page 2



BOTTLE 'EM UP

UPCYCLE Decorating homes with used bottles is the in-thing. It's cost-effective, fun and appealing. On Page 4



Tight pocket, easy décor

MONEY-WISE You don't need to cramp your style because you've got to keep the strings on your purse tight. You just need to be smart while decorating your home, reckons Bindu Gopal Rao

So, you have bought your dream home, spending a fortune, overshooting your "budget". Now how do you do-up your home with what little amount you have left, if at all? You need not fear. There is much and more you can do with what you have, because décor is flexible.

Put needs first

With all the inspiration you get from interior decoration magazines and the web, these days, it is not only easier to decorate your home yourself, but also to desire the fancy stuff on display. Yamini Agarwal, designer and owner, H5 Interior Design, says, "Make a list of requirements and devote a budget to every single item on the list. Then, divide them into wants and needs, and deal with the needs first. Skip as many loose furnishings and artefacts as you can for now. For example, revamping the old furniture with new fabrics and polish can transform it completely into a piece you desire."

It is very important to create a list of things that are absolutely necessary and items that can be put on hold for later. Ashish Shah, COO, Pepperfry.com, advises going DIY way, as it will help you keep within your budget. He suggests, "Be sure to factor in reasonable time for doing every room and make deadlines to keep yourself going. The one thing you may want to newly invest in is good furniture, as it is a long-time investment and its quality matters above all else; buy furniture in neutral colours so that they match with walls of any colour. Most other items can usually be reused, and if you must buy new décor items, try and mix them up with some of the old stuff so that you don't overshoot your budget."

Shop at home

You may want to transform your living space entirely in one go. However, it is not important to do everything at once. Remember that home décor should not be a rushed job. It pays to be patient as it

SMART MOVE Shop at home before you head out to the market; you may already have all that you need.



is going to be a reflection of you, and therefore, needs to be handled with care. Go about it step-by-step, piece-by-piece, and analyse and rework the priority list, if required. Many a time, we don't need as many things as we think we do.

Says Radeesh Shetty, founder, The Purple Turtles, "To make your project

more affordable and manageable, decide what elements will work in your room, and then, check for availability of those items at home first. If nothing similar is available, then, you may want to compare the prices in the market. Shop at home before the market; more often than not, you may already have what you need."

Organise well

No one wants to find themselves in a situation where they've found the perfect couch, only to discover that they don't have enough money in their account or that the non-refundable corner cabinet they've ordered online won't fit into the space. So, organise well and take into account any

associated costs, like hiring handymen.

Tara Khan, creative director, LBOF - A Little Bit Of Fabulous, advises breaking the project down into its components - flooring, furniture, paint, accessories and décor. She explains, "Once you've broken it all down, give each component a number, and stick to the order. Once you know how much money you can afford and what items you already have and can put to use, find your design inspiration to suit those things rather than the other way round. You can refer to magazines and the Internet to figure out what style you would like to emulate, and then you can go ahead with your house decorating project."

Be smart

You may take a loan to buy a house, but it doesn't make economic sense to take a loan for home decoration. These are high-interest loans and do not really make sense availing, because home décor is not an appreciating asset. Also, avoid using your credit card for home décor; it can turn out to be a very expensive proposition.

A spokesperson from Omkar Realtors and Developers suggests using paint or texture paint as an alternative to wall-panelling, going the second-hand route for fancy décor accessories, avoiding false ceiling and opting for decorative lamps instead. "Compare rates online and wait for major discount sales to pick items that aren't absolutely necessary," he suggests.

For people who are often on the move,

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High time we go green

A well-designed green building will save money and create a healthier environment for the people who are residing or working there. It gives improved air quality, natural daylight and thermal comfort. The idea behind it is that the entire building should breathe.

In a city like Bengaluru, growing at an astronomical pace, the concept of green building is, sadly, still a new chapter. Saving water, energy and building material can reduce or eliminate adverse impact of the buildings on environment and for the occupants.

For any green building following three 'R's are a must:

- Rapidly renewable material like bamboo, fly ash and the like.
- Recycled materials, reused building materials.
- Regionally-sourced materials such as clay, bricks and granite.

This apart, compulsory adoption of rain water harvest system in every building and using recycled water are also part of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification programme.

Many buildings, both commercial and residential, are using various efficient ways like streamlining the energy expenditure using hybrid cooling system (air/water cooled/chilled) for air-conditioners, solar-powered landscape lighting and low-energy consuming light fixtures (LED, for instance).

A typical green building consists of recycled building materials, low-toxic-low-embodied energy, high bio-degradability and is still able to maintain long durability. Good indoor air quality is also a part of this concept. Passive solar design, daylight harvesting, use of renewable energy like solar, wind and bio-mass will add to the efficiency of green buildings.

Green buildings cut down energy consumption levels and also increase the productivity levels in any work place by more than 10 per cent and reduce the attrition level. According to many surveys, buildings constitute for about 40 per cent of the world's total energy, about 25 per cent of wood harvesting and 15 per cent by way of water. It is also responsible for about a third of the greenhouse gas emission that causes global warming.

Going green, especially in small houses, is easy. There are many eco-friendly products available in the market, which are quite affordable and worthy of use in the long-run.

● Indoor air quality at home has a great impact on health. It is actually directly connected to the paint used. Eco-paints and strainers help reduce health hazards like headache, nausea, respiratory



SIMPLE TASK Going green, especially in small houses, is easy.

BUILDINGS CONSTITUTE ABOUT 40 PER CENT OF THE WORLD'S TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION.

disorders and dizziness. ● Energy-efficient homes need holistic approach for true sustainability. It must be properly air-sealed, have high-efficiency heating and cooling systems, and must be of the right size to suit the building. ● Using air-tight ducts for good circulation and double-panel, low-emittance windows will retain good indoor air

quality. ● Using low-flow fixtures and small landscaping can help reduce usage of water.

- Residents can make eco-responsible choices, by using rapidly renewable fabrics like cotton, silk and wool.
- Selecting low-VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) paints and integrated furnishing made from recycled wood and metals can make a big difference.
- Roof with solar panels and green roof are other eco-friendly options.

Many western countries, including the US, are going in for more and more green ventures in building construction. In Denmark, for example, there is a multi-use building complex: A dwelling area, along with space for office and retail stores, built into a single part. The complex also includes two large court yards basking in bright sunlight and cooling in green roofing. Another speciality is the bicycle path, which runs up to the tenth floor; it's a smart way to reduce the usage of elevators and escalators! It's about time we begin to tread the green path.

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