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home
It's best to start with a clean slate

REDESIGN / From 15

and moving accessories from one room to another until they achieved what Gilmore called "a unified look."

"She spiced it up, and I only had to buy two new throws — that was all," Gilmore explained. "It was well worth what we paid [for the makeover]."

No sentiment lost

Lybrand says the redesign approach to home decorating is a great alternative for two reasons.

"The biggest factor is the money factor. Redecorating can get very expensive if you have to buy everything new," Lybrand explained. "The second factor is the sentimental attachment that people have to their possessions. A lot of times they don't want to give things up, even if they think it won't fit into their new design theme. With redesign, they don't have to."

For instance, Lybrand says she is currently working with a client in Islamorada who wants a tropical design theme. But the house is full of dark wooden antique furniture, and although she loves the heirloom pieces, the client was certain they would need to be replaced because they don't fit the common conception of island style.

Lybrand said she convinced the client that she could keep the antiques she loves and still achieve the fresh look she wants. By introducing a smattering of wicker or rattan and some other inexpensive tropical design elements, Lybrand says the mood in the room will change completely and her client will have saved a lot of time and money.

Redesign tips

Here are some of Lybrand's top tips for redesign on a budget:

- ◆ Start with a clean slate by removing everything from the room, from floor to ceiling.

"Pictures, furniture, rugs, china — everything goes," Lybrand says. "And be ready to literally let (an item) go, or find another use for it if it doesn't fit your new vision. Less is more."

- ◆ Painting walls is a quick, inexpensive way to completely change the look of a room. Applying paint to only one "accent wall" will add interest to a room in a snap. Lybrand says to choose whatever colors make you happy — unless the house is about to enter the real estate market. In that case, white is the best choice.

"White walls make a room look clean, almost sterile," Lybrand says. "It's safe. White walls appeal to buyers because they know they can live with it and not have to fix it right after moving in."

- ◆ Return the furniture to the room and rearrange it until it is pleasing, creating comfortable, functional seating areas.

- ◆ If the old furniture simply

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