

HOME DECOR AND STYLING TIPS TO WELCOME THE CHANGE OF SEASON

AFTER the Beast from the East, the Pest from the West, and a long winter cooped up indoors, spring is the perfect time to start re-imagining your home.

Warmer temperatures are still some weeks away, but as interior designer Michelle Haynes points out, giving your decor an update now can at least make you feel like the new season has arrived (and ensures you're ready to go outside and enjoy it when it finally does).

"It's all about coming out of hibernation and taking a step back to really assess your home," she says.

"Are some spaces looking cluttered and messy? Are the carpets a bit worn or threadbare in places? Could you be doing something with that empty corner or nook to make it more inviting?"

Check out our guide to the top trends, tips and tricks to help spruce up your home decor for spring.



home cheer: Haynes Interiors designed a fresh new look for this flat in the Barbican's Gilbert House
Photo by Patrick Williamson



solutions: both decorative and functional

Get smart with storage

Tis the season to decamp from the sofa and rid your home of the clutter that always seems to accrue when it's too cold to venture outside to the bins. It's called spring cleaning for a reason.

Sort through collections of books, magazines, records and knick knacks and clear all surfaces of bills, electrical cords and empty bottles. Of course, you can't throw everything away, so get smart with storage solutions that double as decor updates.

"Lots of people complain they don't have built-in storage but everybody has a spare wall somewhere that will be perfect for some open shelving," Michele says.

"Buy some lovely boxes that make you smile, and use those for all the bits and pieces you can't quite bear to part with but nobody else wants to see."

Try Eastern-inspired furniture and homewares store Lombok for woven rattan boxes in a variety of shades and sizes that work stacked neatly in a corner, underneath the bed, or out on display.

Make a statement

Now that things are neat and tidy, take a step back and think about which rooms are looking a little tired. "The simplest way to change the

look and feel of a room is with a big statement piece," Michele says.

"Think big and bold in a couple of key areas; try an oversized side light or a giant house plant or a brightly coloured rug."

Colour your world

Rich jewel tones are replacing the monochromatic palettes of previous seasons – think jade green, cobalt blue and, of course, Pantone's colour of the year for 2018, Ultra Violet.

Soft furnishings are perfect for changing things up or trying a new trend without blowing the budget.

From rugs and wall hangings right down to a padded footstool, embrace patterns or interesting textures to transform a space for the new season. Velvet is the statement fabric of

choice when it comes to soft furnishings; think sofas in pretty shades of blush and lilac, padded dining chairs and bed headboards, or dramatic drapes (avoid the tassels unless you're going for a *Downton Abbey* vibe).

For a quick, easy update, try the Amwell Street showroom of textile designer Timorous Beasties for brightly-hued throw cushions like the Napoleon Bee in Aubergine Velvet (inset, £108 timorousbeasties.com).

Go for gold

Last year the metallic trend started to filter through into paints and metal finishes, but Michele says gold is the go-to in 2018, albeit in a softer, brushed tone rather than the shiny finishes of the late 1990s.

Introduce gold into your living room with chic geometric designs like the Captain Flint floor lamp by FLOS lighting (£1,027 flos.com) featured in the Barbican flat styled by Haynes Interiors above.

"Spherical shapes are everywhere in lighting and accessories," Michelle says. "Designers are also doing really interesting things with

half-circles for a more contemporary take on art deco styles."

Garden state

Nothing says spring like an indoor garden, and with more evidence to suggest the health benefits to living decor, the humble house plant is fast becoming the must-have addition to our interior decor.

Cacti, succulents and ferns have all had their moment on the window sill, but this season it's all about curating an eye-catching combination of different

sizes, shapes, shades and patterns.

"Play around with shapes – go for some leafy types, and succulents, and lots of different shades of green," she says.

"I don't think you can never go too big, unless it's hitting the ceiling, so don't be afraid to pick something that's a little bit out there."

Use big, leafy plants to lift a forgotten corner, cacti for side tables and small surface areas, while trailing plants are good for shelving as they can be draped over different heights to tie them together.



going green: a simple way to inject some life into your home