

## 7 DIY tricks of the trade for doing up your home this summer

The summer is the perfect time to freshen and brighten things up. That surge of energy you get from the sun at this time of year gives you the motivation to finally make a dent in that to-do list. Maybe it's doing something about that dysfunctional kitchen, or replacing those old skirting boards? Or maybe it's just a series of small cosmetic makeovers you've drooled over on Pinterest? There's always something you can do around the house.



Instead of dreading the cost of hiring a worker or having to spend a fortune in furniture shops, why don't you get creative and embrace your inner DIY god (or goddess)? Nowadays there are tons of great online resources to guide you through your project. If needs be, maybe you have a "Handy Andy"-type friend who could help you with the technical details? If not, the staff at your hardware shop might be able to sell you your materials pre-cut to make the process easier for you.

Here are seven great DIY projects that every home could probably do with having. All projects listed can be created on any budget, in any size house.

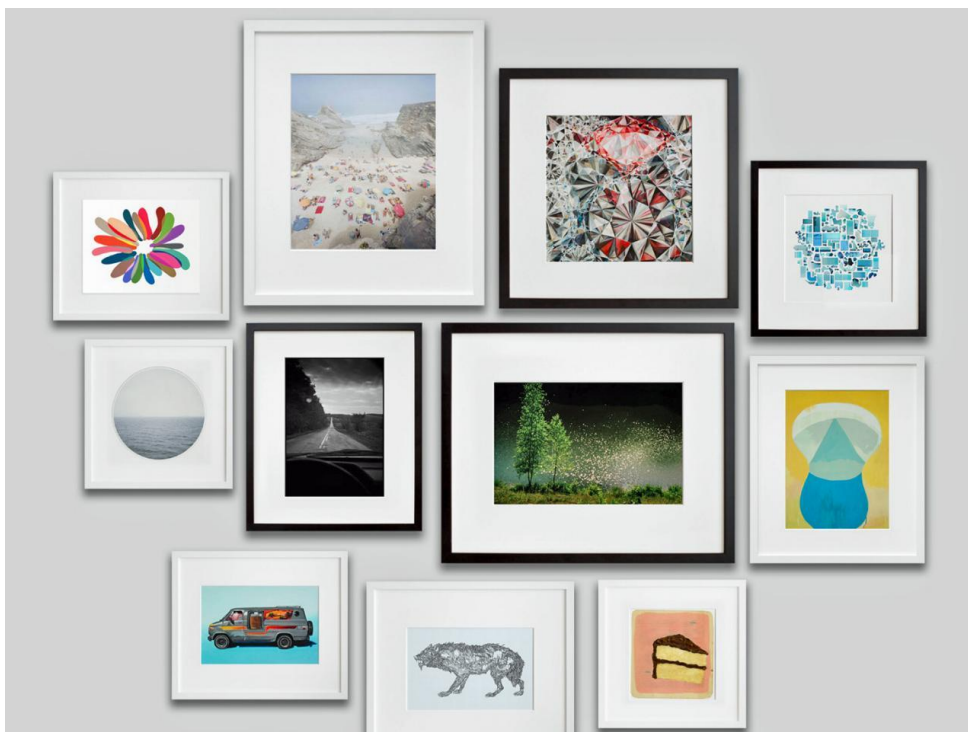
### 1. Install good quality, stylish skirting boards

While it's great that you can save money by doing the work yourself, it's important to remember to be discerning when choosing your materials. For some DIY projects you can use cheap or found objects to create an aesthetic masterpiece. But for other more functional projects, you need to invest in good quality, long-lasting products. [SAM Wrap](#) won't cost you a fortune, but is certainly a wise choice if you're hoping to add some stylish and durable skirting boards to your home. To help you along, this [Youtube tutorial on fitting and installing a skirting board](#) is great. Available in a range

of styles and veneers, SAM Wrap can match your existing units or door finish. And because it's MDF as opposed to solid timber, it is less expensive to install but is very robust.

## 2. Create a gallery wall

Have some glaring blank walls in your home that you're feeling uninspired by? Why not create a gallery wall display? The glory of these displays is that you can make it as vast and as eclectic as you like. If you want to keep it subtle, maybe frame up a few black and white family photographs. Or, if you're hoping to inject some colour and personality to the room, go large. An artistic mix of wall hangings, unframed painted canvases and charity shop frames will give you a trendy, collected vibe. Check out interior design blog [Design\\*Sponge's best gallery walls](#) for some inspiration. Oh, one last tip; before you go drilling holes in your walls willy-nilly, trace each of your pictures onto baking paper and cut to size. This way you can play around with their arrangement and positioning using masking tape.



## 3. Add more storage

This is something every architect and designer will tell you until they're blue in the face; add more storage! We know it's not the most exciting or creative project you'll ever do, but without it, none of your other DIYs will look good in your home. No matter how nice your kitchen table is, it's not going to look good if it's hiding under a pile of random clutter. To avoid clutter building up behind doors, do a major clean-up and purge BEFORE you install your storage (and if you're feeling particularly passionate, you could even give Marie Kondo's *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organising* a read. It's a worldwide bestseller and [those who have applied her method claim it has changed not only the look and feel of their homes for the better](#), but also their whole mentality. Woah, that's impressive).

#### 4. Build a closet home office

With more of us working from home nowadays, creating a home office is a great idea. Even if it's a box room or unused closet, having somewhere to set up your computer and be able to close the doors on it in the evening is essential to creating a harmonious living environment. Installing custom shelving and a desk is inexpensive and means you can tailor it to fit your needs. Depending on how small your work area is, a roll or two of wallpaper can jazz it up a little and you can accessorise with stylish storage boxes and a pinboard. For inspiration, take a look at these [home office ideas from Martha Stewart](#).

#### 5. Update your tired old kitchen cabinets to airy, open-shelving

A DIY kitchen makeover is probably something you've already seen your friends do. Since the downturn in the economy, no longer have we been replacing our kitchen cabinetry every seven years. Instead we've been repainting existing cabinetry and replacing the door handles. Very simple, but very effective. Inexpensive and easily-installed open shelving in a kitchen is really having a moment right now. And it's not a bad idea at all. You know the saying "out of sight, out of mind"! Try to avoid your shelving becoming a dumping ground for ugly, plastic food packets. Instead invest in some simple mason jars and canisters to store dried food and use pretty serving bowls for holding things like onions and garlic.

#### 6. Add updates using clever materials

Another amazing way of adding longevity to your interior design is to add in timeless, classic materials. As a rule of thumb, choose products made with natural fibres in neutral tones. Nature and its inspired homeware never really goes out of style - though it often comes *into* style. Another tip to keep in mind is that what was considered beautiful 100 years ago will probably still be considered beautiful in another 100. This means timber flooring, slate tiling, wainscoting and proper linen. Other safe-bets are subway tiles, pottery, copper and wicker. Neon-coloured plastic might be fine and fun in 2015, but it dates and cheapens quickly. Save yourself having to replace it in the future by buying long-lasting styles now.

#### 7. GIY for the whole family

This last tip is both a DIY and a GIY. Yes, Growing Your Own has become the trendy hobby of choice these days. And as far as trendy hobbies go, it's probably the best one yet. Growing your own organic fruit and veg will not only save your health, but also save you hundreds on your annual grocery expenditure. Getting your kids involved will also excite and entice them to make better food choices as they grow up. For easy DIY raised vegetable beds, check out [Pinterest](#). It's a wealth of knowledge when it comes to useful tips and tricks that your kids can help you out with.



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